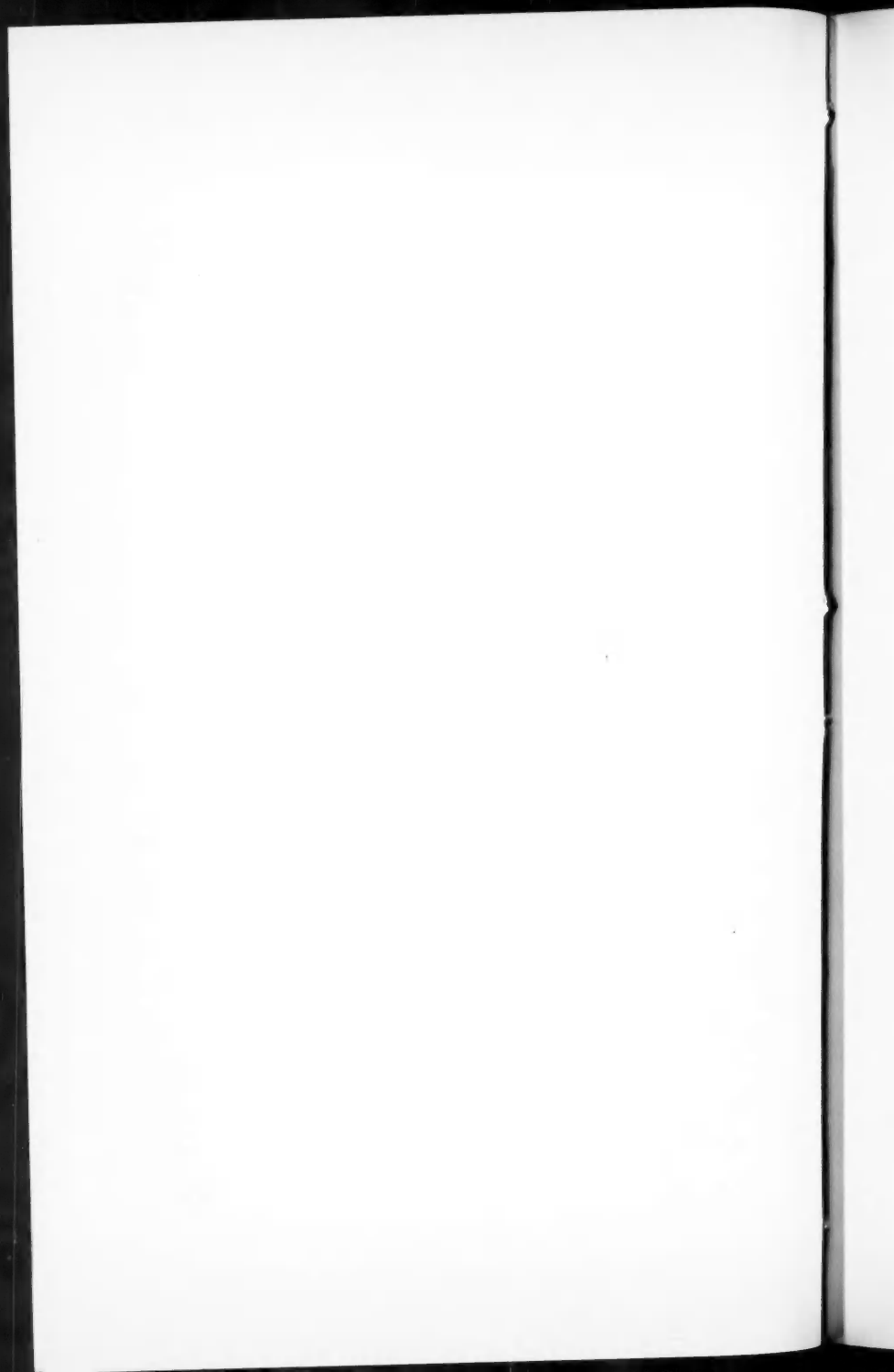


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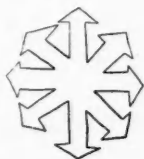
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Business correspondence should be addressed to the distributors.

Editorial correspondence should be addressed to Roger Caillois, Editor, International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies, 19 Avenue Kléber, Paris 16e, France.

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By COLIN CLARK

THE FUTURE OF THE PROLETARIAT

Professor Toynbee's definition of the proletariat is an unusual one. To him, 'proletarianism is a state of feeling rather than a matter of outward circumstance.' Still more allusively, a proletariat is 'any social element or group which in some way is "in" but not "of" any given society at any given stage of such society's history'. Marx defined the word to mean the urban wage workers in modern society. To Professor Toynbee, Marx's definition is what a mathematician would call 'a special case'; and although it is perhaps the largest, it is by no means the sole constituent of the proletariat by Professor Toynbee's definition. It is also possible on Professor Toynbee's definition—this is an essential aspect of the matter which he has not followed up and which is one of the principal subjects of the following article—that a man may be an urban wage worker without being a proletarian.

However, though Professor Toynbee's definition is valuable and is accepted by many, its acceptance is not a prior condition for the reading of this article which is addressed equally to those who regard the words 'proletarian' and 'urban wage worker' as synonyms. Consideration of

The Future of the Proletariat

the future of the urban wage-working population defines my subject-matter.

If we try to look at the question with all the experience of history before us, and on a world-wide basis, instead of confining ourselves in time and space to contemporary Europe and North America, we do begin to understand how the modern urban wage-earning population, though numerically far greater than any other proletariat of any other time or place, is still, nevertheless, only one case among many. At almost every stage in the history of civilisation, Professor Toynbee points out, we find large bands of political and religious exiles, rendered desperate and ruthless by their sufferings, earning a dangerous and destructive livelihood as professional soldiers in the armies of foreign powers—in Professor Toynbee's language, 'dispossessed members of the dominant minority'. We have the larger and unhappier groups who have been reduced to slavery or serfdom and forcibly removed from their homeland, under conditions ranging from the inhuman slave-trade of the Hellenistic period to the comparatively moderate captivity imposed upon the Hebrews in Babylonia. It was a combination of forcible slave-trading and of voluntary migration which produced in Imperial Rome the most outstanding example of a proletariat until modern times were reached, a *colluvies gentium*, in which the general debasement of standards was symbolised by the phrase that 'the Orontes had flowed into the Tiber'. But before we shake our heads over the evils of the ancient world, Professor Toynbee reminds us, we have in our own civilisation caused 'the Congo to flow into the Mississippi' and 'the Yang-tse-kiang to flow into the Straits of Malacca' on a still larger and more devastating scale. Though these migrations may now have stopped, their consequences have not; this is one of the cases where, by the inescapable necessities of history, the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children. While the negro slave-trade ended in the early nineteenth century, something not very far removed from it in the shape of 'indentured labour' continued until comparatively recent times. It was principally in this manner that there was introduced into Malaya and Singapore a Chinese population threatening to outnumber the native Malays. What political and military dangers to the European community, what crises yet to come in future years, have been and will be the consequence of this action?

There are other examples of these forced, or virtually forced, migrations, to which Professor Toynbee does not refer in the passage quoted. Outstanding are the Hindu populations in Fiji, Mauritius, and East and

South Africa. In each of these places they have grown into a large minority, or even an actual majority, of the population, whose interests cannot be disregarded, but who do not mix with either the indigenous or white populations of the lands in which they live. Likewise, we have an immense number of Tamils from South India introduced into Ceylon, where their numbers are about becoming comparable with those of the native Sinhalese; we are sometimes inclined to think of India and Ceylon as one community, but in fact Hinduism and Buddhism are poles apart, in culture as well as in religious belief, and these migrations have caused permanent social tension.

It seems at first sight irrelevant to connect this question with British parliamentary politics. In the general election of 1906 the Liberals defeated the Conservatives in one of the most resounding victories of parliamentary history. As in every election, there was more than one issue; but it seems to be agreed (particularly by Conservative historians accounting for their party's defeat) that the outstanding issue in the minds of the electors was the proposal by the Conservative government to allow capitalists in the recently conquered South African territories to introduce on a very large scale indentured Chinese labourers to work in the gold mines. The words 'Chinese slavery' became the slogan which led the Liberal party to victory. It showed a real generosity in the British people, that they were willing to make one of their principal concerns the well-being of a strange people in a remote quarter of the world, threatened with transportation to another quarter almost equally remote.

Australia gives an example in this matter of a great wrong done, followed by a thorough act of reparation—one of the few examples of such acts in the modern world. The forcible transportation of British convicts to Australia ended in the 1850's, just at the time when the settlement of the tropical coast of Queensland was beginning. Under the sinister *sobriquet* of 'Blackbirders' certain sea captains began bringing large numbers of Polynesians and Melanesians to work on sugar-cane plantations, in what was, in effect, a slave trade, thinly disguised under a legal formality whereby a crowd of savages would have a legal contract of indenture read to them, and apparently give their assent to it. (One of Queensland's leading seaports, Townsville, acquired its name from one of these ruffianly sea captains of the 1860's.) The existence of an increasing coloured population in Queensland was one of the factors provoking Australian public opinion into forming a federation of the six separate Australian colonies in 1901. Though 'Blackbirding' had come to an end,

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a large coloured population remained. In 1907 the newly formed Federal Government embarked upon the bold and ingenious policy of repatriating the whole Polynesian and Melanesian population (except for a very small minority who elected to stay and have since become absorbed into the Australian community), at the same time offering a cash subsidy to all sugar producers who refrained from employing coloured labour. It was in the subsequent years that Queensland proved, what the world had hitherto thought impossible, namely, not only that white men could work in tropical heat without suffering ill effects, but also that they could work at anything up to six times the pace of coloured labour so that the costs per ton of sugar production were actually lower when employing white labour.

Of still greater interest is the fact that, in the latter decades of the nineteenth century, Queensland also attracted a large number of Chinese immigrants whose movements were under no restriction at that time. These were not sugar-cane workers but predominantly gold miners, farmers, artisans, and shop-keepers. Most returned voluntarily to China once they had accumulated some money, and there was no serious attempt at general repatriation. Many of their descendants, however, have remained and have become completely assimilated to the Australian community. In some towns of North Queensland the majority of the traders bear Chinese names. Instead of forming a separate society, they are members—indeed in many cases the outstanding members—of the Australian community. (A well-known story in Queensland recounts how some Italians had offended against the strict Australian trade-union rule which forbids cutting sugar cane before a certain hour in the morning; the trade union inspector went out with a Chinese taxi-driver to confirm the allegation; and when they caught the offenders *in flagrante delicto*, the taxi-driver said to the inspector, 'This looks bad for us Australians.')

A similar story could now be told of the complete americanisation of the descendants of the Japanese indentured labourers settled in Hawaii and California.

The history of the Negroes in America has hitherto been a much less happy one; we look forward in hope to what action the next generation may bring.

The foregoing paragraphs, though under suspicion for the offence of digression, are not, I plead, really guilty of it. The findings of the historian,

and some facts of present-day social geography which we can assemble, are needed in order to remind us that forcible uprooting, *déracinement*, is generally the principal factor in creating a proletariat; and that there are possibilities (to this we shall return later) of repairing this evil, however infrequently, so far, mankind has succeeded in doing so.

We have confined ourselves, so far, to 'the internal proletariat' (again to use Professor Toynbee's language). The concept of an 'external proletariat' covers some fascinating speculations in a field into which I am not qualified to enter. The essential doctrine is that, while a civilisation is still in its expanding and creative stage, all its neighbours, who have contact with it, will seek to imitate, to the best of their ability, its achievements. As a result, expanding civilisations have no sharp boundaries; their neighbours shade off by stages, through partly civilised to predominantly barbarous people, before complete barbarism begins; but at some point there is a *limen* or threshold. But once the creative phase of a civilisation has ended and it has ceased to inspire respect and a desire to imitate it, the *limen* immediately is transformed into a *limes* or fortified military frontier for defence against attack. Those who were once willing, and indeed admiring, junior partners in the task of creating and spreading civilisation, have now become a hostile and suspicious external proletariat.

These concepts are doubtless of great importance in themselves; they are also important in drawing our attention to certain parallelisms with the internal proletariat which is our present concern; we may indeed go further and consider the circumstances under which there may be co-operation and even military and political alliances between elements in the internal and the external proletariat. But we must now return to our main theme.

Just now we reminded ourselves that the modern world is certainly not entitled to point the finger of scorn at the ancient world for its crime of enslaving and transporting whole populations. Perhaps we repent the actions of our ancestors and will make genuine attempts at reparation. But, we ask ourselves, have we not, during the past century, effected such enormous improvements in social and economic conditions that we are entitled to stop and give ourselves credit, and to claim that the proletarianism of the past is no longer with us? No, Professor Toynbee replies, '*à la fin du compte*, the transfer of population from countryside to town has produced the same cancer in the Western as in the Hellenic body social; the cancer of an urban proletariat which has lost its roots in the country, and has struck no roots in the town.'

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In the discussion in the context, and in allusions scattered through the rest of his text, Professor Toynbee brings out that the defining conditions of this huge urban proletariat, which is our present-day subject-matter, are, firstly, this *déracinement*, both topographic and cultural; secondly, the sense of being deprived of one's rightful place in society, implying a memory of (or at least a belief in) a more honourable position held by one's ancestors; thirdly, economic and social insecurity—the real wage of a person at urban work may be far higher than that of his father, but much or all of this benefit is nullified if he lives his life in a state of perpetual anxiety and fear of unemployment.

We are beginning to see now that proletarianism is not easy to define; that the subjective elements may be more important than the objective; that it depends upon a combination of factors and not upon one or two which can be precisely specified.

May I restate one aspect of it in the words of the Australian philosopher Dennis Jackson:

It is the community of families which is required for the making of 'whole' men and women. Today, the life of that community has broken down almost entirely in the world of the great cities—the home, the neighbourly associations, the cultural traditions, no longer exist, but all has been resolved into a chaos without beauty, significance, or stability, through which 'the masses' move to and fro like leaves before the wind, each unit jostling an unknown, looking into strange faces which mean nothing in his life. In such a world the home life is held together almost by violence, and at great sacrifice: the framework of 'neighbourhood' in which it should exist is absent.

In the significant ceremony in 1946 in which the Pope created new Cardinalates throughout the world to raise the College of Cardinals to its full complement, His Holiness said, in the course of his address:

Man, as God wants him and as the Church accepts him, will never consider himself as firmly fixed in space and time if stripped of secure property and traditions. Herein the strong find the source of their ardent and fruitful vitality, and the weak, who are always the majority, are protected against pusillanimity and apathy, against slipping from their dignity as men.

'Secure property and traditions'—surely those are the key words.

We have spoken hitherto of proletarianism as a somewhat indefinite feeling of having been deprived of one's rightful place in society. This puts the concept in somewhat more definite form. Men may not have a

very accurate knowledge of the social conditions under which their grandparents lived; but they will understand fairly clearly that secure property and traditions were something which their ancestors had, and which they no longer have. It is true that Belloc in *The Servile State*, writing as early as 1912, thought that proletarianism had already lasted so long in England that all memory of the previous social order of peasant and artisan proprietorship had passed away. But he had vivid recollections, as a university student in the 1890's, of having spoken to old Englishmen who had faced imprisonment in resisting landlords' enclosure of common grazing lands.¹ But even if Belloc is right about the loss of the tradition of property, some of the other traditions of Merrie England still surely persist and, in any case, while 1912 may have been a comparatively late date in the calendar so far as the proletarianisation of England was concerned, it was still a very early date for most of the rest of the world. Much of what we must now regard as the world proletariat is of quite recent formation.

Once we have come to look upon proletarianism as definable, not by any objective conditions so much as by a strange subjective combination of atavistic memories, present insecurities, and a sense of being displaced from the position and deprived of the status in society to which one is rightfully entitled, we begin to understand its far-reaching consequences. A well-known recipe for the treatment of seasickness opens with the words that certain drastic treatments are required 'upon becoming indifferent to the fate of the ship . . .' It is true that the seasick traveller reaches a stage where he does not care whether the ship sinks or not. We are not far wrong in regarding this as the attitude of the proletarian towards the society of which he is a member.

Let us contrast the Toynbee doctrine with the Marxian. The Marxian doctrine, if I understand it right, is that we define feudal society by the existence of a predominantly serf population; that in any postfeudal society, unless all the implements of production are owned by public authority, there will be a proletariat, rapidly increasing in numbers to engulf what is left of the farm and artisan population, and no less

¹It is perhaps appropriate to quote the old English verse—

They put in jail the man or woman

Who steals the goose from off the common—

But let the greater felon loose

Who steals the common from the goose.

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inexorably subject, through the working of the Marxian laws of economics, to increasing unemployment and to decreasing standards of living.

In Professor Toynbee's doctrine we must draw a sharp distinction, both from the point of view of the internal and the external proletariat, between civilisations in their creative and their postcreative phases. The change of the attitude of the external proletariat from respectful imitation to contemptuous hatred has been noted above. But it is the same internally. The original achievements of any civilisation are generally the work of a small 'creative minority'; but so long as they can create beauty, order, and wealth (in that order of importance—reversing the Marxian scale which puts economics first, politics second, and culture last), the creative minority will be respected and, so far as is possible, imitated by all other sections of society. When they have ceased to create, they transform themselves by an inevitable process into a 'dominant minority', grasping, oppressive, and violent. A proletariat may be created by deportations and political exile; but even without these, the mere alienation of the mass of the people from the dominant minority may serve, before long, to produce the same effect. This 'secession of the proletariat', it is implied in several passages, is irrevocable; at any rate, every civilisation known to history has reached a point, fairly sharply defined in time, at which a secession of the internal and external proletariat has occurred; and this has been a point of no return, from which the civilisation has never recovered but has gone into an irrevocable decline. At the same time, there are certain other passages in Professor Toynbee's writings which hold out some hope that this secession may be rectified in the future even if it never has been in the past.

Enough has been said, surely, to give us all the feeling of extreme concern about the world in which we are now living. 'In our civilisation', wrote Mr. Harold Nicolson, 'the secession of the proletariat, both internal and external, has already begun.' Mr. Nicolson, and some of his fellow thinkers in England, have already applied these doctrines to the interpretation of our present position a little more boldly than Professor Toynbee has been willing to do himself. If their interpretation is correct, there is no need to dwell upon the consequences.

But now we can, and should, refresh ourselves with a draught of hope. What examples, if any, does history show of a reversal of the process of proletarianisation? Professor Toynbee quotes many examples of those 'whose response to the challenge of having their roots plucked up has been to strike fresh root in virgin soil overseas . . . French Protestants . . .

Irish Catholics . . . American Loyalists . . . German Liberals . . . American and Australian descendants of English indentured servants and deported convicts . . . Negro populations as self-supporting peasants in the Black Belt of the New World . . . 'all of them 'refusing to join the proletariat, or at any rate refusing to remain in it'.

These diverse examples surely give a lead to our thoughts. Migration, in itself, is not condemned. (We can be thankful for this; otherwise there would have been a headlong clash between the historian and the economist; for the economist is almost bound to reach the conclusion that large-scale migration is needed in the modern world, and will probably become even more necessary in future epochs.) Indeed, we seem to be tending towards the paradoxical result that migration over great distances, or into a foreign community, may be much more beneficial for all concerned than short distance migration, from country to town, within one's own state. Paradoxical, but very probably true. Turn back to our key phrase, 'secure property and traditions'. Men migrating over great distances do their best to bring their traditions with them, even if they cannot bring their property; and at any rate, conditions in a new country generally enable them to re-accumulate some property within a generation. *Caelum non animam mutant qui trans mare currunt* and *sidere mutato mens eadem* have served as mottoes for Australian universities. But it is the hasty absorption of a country population into the huge industrial cities which destroys property and traditions alike, without giving any opportunity to re-create them.

Just as we cannot unreservedly condemn migration, and in certain circumstances may indeed commend it, likewise also with urbanisation. Without cities, indeed, there can be no civilisation. But the cities which have made the greatest contribution to European culture have grown slowly and naturally with a strong element of tradition in their structure. They have been, basically, cities of independent, property-owning artisans, traders, and political leaders. The first appearance of a proletariat in European civilisation is placed in the fourteenth century by Professor Pirenne, who traces its origin in a masterly manner.

Between the master-craftsmen and the apprentices or journeymen whom they employed goodwill had lasted so long as it was easy for the latter to rise to the position of masters. But from the moment that population ceased to grow and the crafts were faced with the necessity of stabilising production, the acquisition of mastership had become more and more difficult . . . long terms of apprenticeship . . . raising of

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fees . . . each corporation of artisans was gradually transformed into a selfish clique of employers, determined to bequeath to their sons or sons-in-law the fixed clientele of their small workshops.

By the fourteenth century in Flanders (considerably later in most parts of Europe) 'the nature of the "great commerce" and of the capitalistic industry inevitably condemned them to the insecurity of a wage-earning class and to all the misery of crises and stoppages.'

We have now reached the stage where we can pause and recapitulate. The existence of a proletariat, using the word as we have defined it, is an unmitigated evil. The only reasonable prospect for the proletariat is somehow or other to cease to be a proletariat. This means a conscious and sustained effort to create a society in which every man enjoys not only material wealth—the production and distribution of wealth is a problem which we are in sight of solving—but also, and this is the harder problem, his secure property and traditions, his sense of belonging, his feeling that he is enjoying his rightful place in society. And there is no earthly prospect, however much some may wish to do it, of re-creating the society of the past. Our society must be one of the future, sharing, perhaps, some features of older societies but in other respects radically different. It must be a society in which men can feel secure, without the authoritarian rigidity which was often the price of economic security in the past. It must be an urban society, in the sense that only a minority of its members earn their living by agriculture, but it must avoid the ruthless impersonality of the modern large city by dispersing people in small communities in which the ordinary man will feel that he counts. It must have traditions without rigidity, and mobility without restlessness. Economic and social mobility, in the sense that men must be ready and able to change their job when circumstances demand it, and must be able to seek employment of a different nature from that of their fathers, is a necessary condition of economic progress. There can be no argument about that.

But an important factor contributing to proletarianism is excessive mobility. To any man, the work which he does should not merely be the means of obtaining a livelihood. It should also be looked upon and respected as his vocation, the due performance of which is one of his most important duties in this world. To be attached to his craft, to strive to attain perfection in it, to meet and form organisations with his fellow craftsmen—these are all things which give a sense of 'belonging', and are antidotes to proletarianism. Still more is this the case where a man follows the same craft as his father, and a tradition begins to be built up. These

considerations do not forbid a man to change his employment or to follow a different occupation from his father; but they certainly do point out the danger to society of excessive mobility. The task of the statesman is to promote mobility just to the degree required for economic progress, without overstimulating it.

A little study,³ based on interviews with as many as possible of the younger men of a small town in California, throws a great deal of light on the processes of social and economic mobility as they now prevail in California, one of the most mobile and restless of all districts in our modern civilisation. The average man, by the time he reached the age of thirty-five, was found to have followed more than *four different occupations*. (Take note that this is the average, not the maximum.) The great majority of these citizens must have felt devoid of any attachment whatever to any occupation or craft, let alone to any occupation traditional in their family.

But in spite of this intense superficial mobility, most movements, when further analysed, were found to be in a narrow social range. Entry into the professions is confined (by law or by custom) to those with three or more years of college education, with the result that 71 per cent of the professional men are sons of business or professional men. Of the proprietors and managers of business, 75 per cent are recruited from the sons of professional and businessmen. At the other end of the scale, the unskilled manual workers are themselves almost all the sons of unskilled men or of the least successful farmers.

If this picture is in any way typical, the U.S. seems to be getting the worst of both worlds. Every man keeps on changing his occupation but generally seems to end up at something not very different from his father's position. The classes are showing distinct signs of becoming stratified. To have largely a hereditary class of professional men, of farmers, of business proprietors, with some moderate degree of movement into and out of these classes, might be defensible, if men following other occupations also had certain hereditary prospects and traditions. *Per contra*, a society of intense mobility might be defensible, if the best paid and most honoured posts were equally open to children of whatever parentage. But to have a society which is beginning to stratify into hereditary classes, in which individual members suffer a restless up-and-down movement without any great prospect of ending up

³ Anderson and Davidson, *Occupational Mobility in an American Community*. Stanford University: Stanford University Press, 1936.

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in a different class, really does seem to be having the worst of both worlds.

The growth of proletarianism in the U.S. during recent decades has been one of the most alarming features of the modern world. Those who owned their businesses, or had hopes of doing so, used to be sufficiently numerous to give the whole tone to American society not very long ago:

OCCUPIED POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION

	1890	1920	1950
Professional Men	4.9	5.0	7.2
Farmers	23.6	15.5	7.0
Other Proprietors and Managers of Businesses	5.9	6.7	10.4
Clerks and Salesmen	4.3	13.8	19.0
Farm Labourers	13.2	9.4	5.1
Other Manual Workers	48.1	49.6	51.3

This change in outlook has shown itself during the last two decades in the extremely rapid growth of an entirely new kind of unionism. The old American Federation of Labor type of trade-unionism before 1930 had defects and abuses in abundance, but it did remain essentially a loose federation of unions of skilled men, organised in their crafts. The Congress of Industrial Organizations, with the American Federation of Labor now largely following suit, almost ignores craft and is concerned only to build up powerful and ruthless organisations of large masses of men, with the intention of creating a power sufficient to match that of the great capitalist groups with whom it has to negotiate.

As with occupational mobility, so with geographical. In this case, it is not so easy to prove that economic progress requires such movements, except when we are considering the settlement of hitherto undeveloped territories—and this type of settlement, as Professor Toynbee has pointed out, often has most beneficial effects in de-proletarianising what might otherwise have been a proletarian population. Excepting this case, we have an important recent theoretical demonstration by Professor Samuelson to the effect that, broadly speaking, all the beneficial effects to be

expected from migration of population can be obtained by doing nothing more than permitting an unimpeded movement of goods and capital between the areas in question. Even if this proposition be not entirely accepted, there are few who would wish to subject it to more than a moderate degree of qualification. Thus there is no very compelling economic reason for most of the concentration of population in large industrial cities. It is not to be denied that manufacturers generally prefer them, and in many countries a large proportion of manufacturers try to get their works located in the capital city. This process generally goes on until either land values, or wages, or both, in the capital city rise to a height which begins to drive industry away.

Many theoretical works have been written, following Weber's original work in Germany, showing by elaborate diagrams how a manufacturer will tend to locate his business at points accessible to his supply of raw materials and to his market. This line of thought has paid too much attention to the special conditions prevailing in German and American heavy industry, and the theoretical results are very remote from the facts in describing the location of the general run of industries throughout the world. The heavy industries, which are 'materials-oriented' (i.e., compelled to a location not too far distant from their source of raw materials), represent only a minor part of industry as a whole, and a part of decreasing relative importance; and in any case, as the efficiency of transport improves, even in heavy industry, these considerations are becoming of somewhat less significance. The vast majority of industries are 'market-oriented'. Transport costs are not the only consideration involved, though they are important. Physical proximity to the market, a multitude of contacts (formal or informal) with potential buyers, all these are greatly valued by the modern businessman.

These results can, if we like, be stated in a more precise and scientific form as the 'law of economic potential'. The word 'potential' will immediately convey a clear meaning to a physicist. To one unaware of the use of this word in the theory of electricity, a considerable amount of explanation will unfortunately be necessary. The electrical potential at any point will depend upon all electric charges which may affect it, but their distance from the point must also be taken into account. The economic potential of any point may be defined as the sum of the purchasing power of all markets within its reach, each purchasing power being divided by the transport cost of reaching it. The world's points of highest economic potential are the American Middle West, the English Midlands, and South

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Western Germany. Manufacture is attracted to a remarkable degree to points of high potential and repelled from points of low potential.

In most issues of economic theory there is, eventually, some equilibrium at which this situation is at any rate theoretically capable of resting, numerous though the impediments may be in the way of reaching such equilibrium. But on the question of the location of industry, there is no equilibrium. Once a dense urban population has grown up, it provides a market which attracts further industries towards it. If we leave things to themselves, there seems to be nothing to stop this process going on to the point where all the manufactures in the world are attracted into the one small district. After all, a century ago, our ancestors were seriously considering whether Lancashire and Yorkshire and the English Midlands would not serve as the workshop of the entire world. If transport costs had been lower, and if other countries had not decided to build up their manufactures under the shelter of tariff protection, something like this might have happened.

Excessive concentration of population in large cities, with all its terrible social consequences, can thus hardly be described as the consequence of the working out of some beneficial economic law. It is rather a process which will never regulate itself in the way that other economic processes do, but imperatively calls for regulation by political authority.

The fact that in most countries political authorities are themselves wedded to the interests of the capital city and the big-city type of civilisation and tend to encourage rather than to control the further development of big cities, does, of course, make matters infinitely worse.

In our task of de-proletarianisation we must expect bitter opposition from both Marxists and capitalists. The existence of a proletariat, to a Marxist, is of the very essence of his being. In the proletariat resides that mysterious Force to whose service he devotes his life, from which will come, eventually, revolution and the creation of a new society. The Marxist claims that all this is a matter of historical necessity. If he really believed that, he would be less disturbed in mind about it. He is in fact very upset and annoyed when he hears any suggestion that a proletariat might be de-proletarianised.

The capitalist (defining this word not as anybody possessing capital, but confining its meaning to the large employer of labour) also generally prefers to see a proletarian population, preferably one subject to some degree of unemployment and economic insecurity, waiting outside his factory gates until he may find it convenient to employ it. Capitalists

and Communists often tacitly work hand in hand to proletarianise their country (Australia is a good example of a country where this has happened), each thinking that he is going to benefit from it. We must give the Communist the credit for being far-sighted; the manufacturer's myopia is incredible. Dr. Johnson's ideas may be a little too Tory for present-day tastes, but he certainly laid his finger on the weakness of businessmen:

Those who look but little into futurity have, perhaps, the quickest sensation of the present. A merchant's desire is not of glory, but of gain, not of public wealth, but of private emolument; he is, therefore, rarely to be consulted on questions of war or peace, or any designs of wide extent and distant consequence.

It need hardly be pointed out that Dr. Johnson and Americans did not see eye to eye, even in those early days.

Let us, therefore, not underrate the difficulties with which any programme of de-proletarianisation will be confronted.

Nevertheless, such a programme is perfectly practicable. There are three lines of action by which we can proceed, but the whole programme is summed up in a single word—dispersal. Firstly, dispersal of property, so that in place of a few enormous capitalistic concerns or nationalised industries (they look remarkably alike from the workers' point of view), we have a host of working proprietors, family businesses and small employers. Impracticable under modern industrial conditions? Not a bit of it; have a look at the facts as set out below.

Secondly, dispersal of political power. The motive force creating the huge modern city with its proletarian population is often little more than the desire to pander to the vain-glory of a sovereign prince, or of the politicians who speak in the name of a sovereign people, who are generally worse still. Most modern European communities show a quite excessive concentration of political power. Switzerland and those communities outside Europe which have genuinely accepted the federal system have managed to secure its dispersal. But in these communities it is even truer than elsewhere, that the price of liberty is eternal vigilance. The tendency for power, if unchecked, to concentrate on one point, must for ever be watched and guarded against.

Thirdly, geographical dispersal of population. Increasing concentration of population in large industrial cities is partly a consequence of the concentration of economic power, partly a consequence of the concentration of political power, partly a phenomenon in its own right, if we may so put it (or, should we say, in its own wrong?).

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To what extent is it necessary to have concentrations of economic power, whether capitalistic enterprises or nationalised industries (whose similarities are much more important than their divergencies)? Only where the technical conditions of production require it. And where does this happen? *Par excellence*, in certain forms of transport (railways, shipping, and airlines), in heavy industry, and in forms of manufacture requiring very extensive equipment; in other forms of manufacture, to a more moderate degree; in banking and insurance; in armies and navies, and other activities organised by central rather than by local governments.

Having enumerated these, our list is complete. In other fields the large-scale organisation is not only unnecessary but is generally at a positive disadvantage, which it sometimes counteracts through its financial power or political influence; it is not needed in agriculture, in road transport, in wholesaling, in retailing, in education, in building, in hotels, cafes, laundries, and other personal service industries. Unlike manufacture, these industries are not dealing with a steady routine of production. As soon as the organisation becomes at all large, the supervision and co-ordination of the work of a number of employees becomes both difficult and costly.

Many will be surprised to learn what a small proportion of the labour force in a modern community need be occupied in industries requiring large-scale organisation; and not only a small proportion, but a diminishing one. In an advanced community, the demand for manufacture tends to settle down at a level of only some 20 per cent of the entire national income; and the proportion of the labour force required, at an ever lower percentage (because productivity in manufacture tends to rise faster than in other activities). The proportion of the labour force required for transport in a modern community may fall as low as 6 per cent, and an increasing proportion of these are road transport workers who can work in small units. A large part of the remainder are those transport workers who are required in every big city merely to move the inhabitants to and fro; with the disappearance of big cities, the proportion of the labour force required for transportation would fall very low.

If banking and insurance occupy 2 per cent of the labour force that is a high figure.

We are left with government departments, and one is almost tempted to say that, so strong is the itch for large-scale organisation in the modern world, that, finding we have soon run out of useful economic objectives for it, we set to work to create useless government departments, in order

to have as many people as possible engaged in large-scale organisations, instead of working more naturally in small businesses.

On the concentration of political power there is little more to be said. The desire to get close to the foundation of authority is undoubtedly one of the factors attracting manufacturers and other businessmen into capital cities. We should consider ourselves bound by the principle of subsidiarity, whereby all public authorities should be organised on a small scale until the need for larger-scale organisation can be proved, and placing the *onus probandi* always upon the would-be centraliser. Services such as schools and hospitals will probably be run better by a multiplicity of small organisations than by attempting to concentrate.

Much of the case for political concentration in the past has arisen from the shortage of educated men capable of administering public services and the consequent need for concentrated authority and uniform policy over wide areas. This reason is, or we hope soon will be, obsolete. In the future we should expect an abundance, perhaps even an embarrassing abundance, of such men.

Geographical dispersal to small communities is something which will not come at all of its own accord. It must be planned from above and must be carried through by a strong, indeed almost ruthless, political authority. We could, if we wished, build in the modern world communities with populations as small as 2,500. These would be able to have a shopping centre, medical service, municipal government, more than one primary school, and an active social life. (Any community smaller than this, however, seems destined to slow extinction in the modern world.)

It is not suggested that population be entirely dispersed into such small groups. The populations of these points could be treated as basic units and given the highest possible measure of municipal authority. Economically, such a community would be able to find employment for a considerable portion of its labour force in the local retailing and service activities. But it would need, in addition, either agricultural land or some industry or other large-scale activity, deliberately placed in its midst, in order to provide employment for the remainder of the labour force. Such communities would have to be grouped, of course, for higher educational, cultural, and commercial services. A grouping in triads with populations of 7,000-8,000 would enable many of these needs to be supplied. For some purposes, such as universities, specialist medical services, and the more specialised forms of commercial activity, a population up to 250,000 would

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be required. But with modern methods and transport and communication there is certainly no need to have all these living in a single city.

It may in the end turn out to be the case that the invention of the atom bomb was a blessing in disguise because, for the first time, it has really made people think hard of the dispersal of our overgrown industrial cities.

There is no doubt that dispersal, in all three senses of the word, is the necessary line of action to take to retard the increased schism in our social order and to put an end to proletarianism. But can we hope that any political authority will have the vigour to carry such a programme through against the numerous and almost insuperable obstacles?

This study opened with Professor Toynbee's definition of 'proletariat' and a commentary on his account of how it came to be formed. Perhaps we can conclude with a quotation from the same source:

In our generation, in which the lately brilliant prospects of a neopagan dominant minority have been rapidly growing dim, the sap of life is visibly flowing once again through all the branches of our Western Christendom. . . . We may yet live to see a civilisation which has tried and failed to stand alone, being saved, in spite of itself, from a fatal fall by being caught in the arms of an ancestral church which it has vainly striven to push away and keep at arm's length. . . . An apostate Western Christendom may be given grace to be born again as the *Respublica Christiana* which is its own earlier and better ideal of what it should strive to be.

Is such spiritual re-birth possible? If we put Nicodemus's question, we may take his instructor's answer.

By LIONELLO VENTURI

PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA—SEURAT—GRIS

The director of the National Gallery in London told me recently that the most popular pictures in his museum are Piero della Francesca's 'Baptism of Christ' and 'Nativity', and it is common knowledge that art-lovers sensitive to the present trends of taste nowadays go to Arezzo to see the frescoes in the Church of St. Francis rather than to Rome for the sake of Raphael's Loggias or Michelangelo's ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.

Piero has not always been so high in public favour. His contemporaries appreciated and admired his skilled geometry and his effects of light; the same point of view is found in the sixteenth-century writings of Giorgio Vasari, who was born at Arezzo, a descendant of one of Piero della Francesca's pupils, and who took a special interest in the master. But the survival of Piero's fame depended on overcoming the difficulty that Florence and Rome were for long the cynosure of all eyes whenever there was talk of art centres. Piero was not a Florentine, and his works were not easily accessible. In the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries few people made the journey to Arezzo, Borgo San Sepolcro, or Urbino. And if they had done so, they would have found neither what Raphael

would have called beauty, nor observance of the rules of classic composition, and still less the Baroque tendencies then so much in vogue.

Those who, early in the nineteenth century, took a fresh interest in the 'primitives', were frankly repelled by Piero della Francesca's painting; Baron von Rumohr, for instance, tells us that it is not worth attention. It is understandable, moreover, that people who regarded Perugino as the perfect incarnation of the ideal in art should be chary of Piero della Francesca!

When nineteenth-century taste took a turn towards a realism tempered by the painter's selection from nature, Piero della Francesca came into favour because of the vigour of his brush. But he was increasingly criticised for the absence of ideal beauty and the over-emphasis on the geometry of forms in his work. Even Mr. Berenson, who drew attention to Piero's greatness as early as 1897, stressing the impassive calm of his pictures, free from emotion, admitted that his knowledge of perspective was sometimes a hindrance and that his works did not always attain beauty. This year, however, Mr. Berenson has published an essay on Piero della Francesca in which, without reservation, he expands on the theme of the artist's impassivity, emphasising its importance so far as to arrive at a definition of universal art, whose purpose is to *be* or exist rather than to express or represent. In the interim, Mr. Longhi had drawn attention to the unity of perspective and surface, of geometrical form, and of light and colour in Piero's painting. Many other writers, too, had taken a deep interest in him.

It should be realised, however, that the critics are not responsible for the enthusiastic public interest in Piero today, or, where they are, only to a very limited extent. The interest of art-lovers in Arezzo is attributable to the passion for the abstract which has possessed the greatest artists throughout the world in their work during the last seventy years.

Mr. Berenson considers Cézanne the cause of this development, but I do not think he is right. The Italian primitives who came back into favour with the contemporary public as a result of Cézanne's influence were Giotto and Masaccio. There is very little abstraction in Cézanne, who is closely attached to life (*pace* the critics who still maintain the opposite view today).

Of the great painters of the late nineteenth century, Georges Seurat bears most resemblance to Piero della Francesca. 'Painting is only a demonstration of surfaces and bodies with increasing or diminishing bounds.' It is a demonstration of perspective, designed to give a scientific

knowledge of the essence or natural objects apart from transient phenomena. The same applies to Seurat; the method he uses to achieve 'the art of penetrating a surface' is thoroughly scientific. Seurat said on another occasion: 'Art is harmony. Harmony is the analogy of opposites, the analogy of counterparts of tone and colour and line.'¹

Neither Seurat nor Piero has said anything about his experience of nature, although each was intensely aware of it. Piero owes his experience to his immediate predecessors, the Florentine painters (above all, Masaccio) and the artists of Bruges (first and foremost, Jan van Eyck).² Seurat gained his from the Impressionists, particularly Pissarro. Both artists show the same double development in their work, moving, firstly, from the concrete to the abstract or from nature to harmony and, secondly, from the abstract to the concrete or from perspective geometry to the image. The art of both masters is a combination of these two trends.

Immobility, impassivity, impersonality, the view of the world *sub specie aeternitatis*, all follow from the double development to which I have referred; all our experience of the natural world is in fact moulded by the absolute, impassive, transcendancy of geometrical form, and no harmony of line and colour, even though it be fixed for all eternity, is devoid of the vibrant quality of life.

The kinship between the two painters is not confined to the principles they followed, but also extends to their artistic qualities; their sense of stability and their love of absolute proportion, their passion for the monumental, the fine balance of light and colour, make their art similar in spite of the centuries which lie between them and their different environment.

Yet it was not Seurat who sent art-lovers flocking to Arezzo. It was Cubism.

Among the great Cubists, Picasso has twice in his career come close to the same conception as Piero. The first was the 'rose' period. 'La Femme à l'éventail' in the Mary Harriman Collection in New York is a masterpiece of concrete abstraction, a living exemplified ideal. Again in 1924, at the time of the revival of Cubism, Picasso painted several pictures, such as 'Le Tapis Rouge', in which it is difficult to tell what are geometrical shapes and what represents real objects.

¹cf. John Rewald, *Seurat*. Paris, 1948.

²cf. Piero della Francesca's treatise, *De Prospectiva Pingendi*. Edited by G. Nicco Fasola. Florence, 1942; and *De Corporibus Regularibus*. Memoria di G. Mancini. Rome: Accademia dei Lincei, 1915.

In several of his 'Barques sur la Plage', Braque also combined concrete and abstract form with such genius that the effect achieved is magical. But though he owes much to Cubism, it was not an essential factor in the development of his genius. Contrasted with the rigorous precision of Piero, Braque seems to come closer to the Impressionists.

On the other hand, we can see that same rigorous precision and objective detachment in Juan Gris. Mr. Kahnweiler tells us that, long after the painter's death, Picasso remarked, in speaking of one of Gris's pictures, 'It's good to see a painter who knows what he's doing.' Gris knew so well what he was doing that he was able to evolve a very clear theory.³ 'Painters have always worked inductively. They have given a pictorial representation of something proper to a specific reality; they have taken a picture from a subject. My method is just the opposite. It is deductive. The picture X comes to coincide with my picture . . . Pictorial mathematics brings me to representative physics. The quality or dimensions of a form or a colour suggest to me the denomination or the adjective describing an object' (p. 278). 'There is no doubt that a purely scientific discovery, which is merely capable of application to the technique of painting, like the Italian discovery of perspective, has influenced all aesthetics since the Renaissance' (p. 281). 'The only methods which are constant in painting are those which are purely architectural. I would go so far as to say that the only possible technique in painting is a sort of architecture of colour on one plane' (p. 282). 'I am well aware that, at the outset, Cubism was a form of analysis, no more constituting painting than a description of physical phenomena constitutes physics. But now that all the elements of so-called Cubist aesthetics are judged by the technique of picture-painting, now that the analysis of yesterday has become a synthesis, by setting forth the relationships between the objects themselves, this reproach can no longer be levelled at it. Regarded as only an aspect of style, what was called Cubism is no more; regarded as a theory of art, it has become an integral part of painting' (p. 290).

In the view of Piero della Francesca, perspective was not a method of painting; it was an ideal, an artistic tenet, the prime source of all formal creation. His method was thus very similar in essence to that of Juan Gris, who has the modern man's awareness of the distinction between the empirical and the mathematical, the inductive and the deductive way of proceeding. Gris regards his own method as akin to the Italian use of

³Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, *Juan Gris*. Paris, 1946.

perspective; in his opinion, the ideal is Cubist abstraction, proceeding from the mathematical to the physical. Admittedly, the ascendancy of the purely physical element is much less obvious in his work than in that of Piero or Seurat. The important thing is the ultimate destination, the result of creative activity—in this case, an *idealised architecture*. That is the common bond between Piero della Francesca, Georges Seurat, and Juan Gris.

There is the source of the present current in favour of Piero della Francesca. It is to be found in our hungry desire for architecture, which architects, in spite of their magnificent efforts in the last forty years, have not succeeded in satisfying. As we are not yet able to produce real architecture in houses or churches, we produce it in painting, or we go to Arezzo. It does not matter whether or not painting is thus sacrificed to architecture; what matters is that the creative imagination of man shall develop freely.

We are witnessing a very impressioned, bold, and deeply committed phenomenon of taste. We cannot know where it will lead. It may lead nowhere, but, in history, it is the phenomenon itself which counts.

THE RELIGIOUS FACTOR IN HUMAN GEOGRAPHY: ITS FORCE AND ITS LIMITS

In concluding his treatise on human geography Jean Brunhes put the question, 'What would the earth have been like had not mankind appeared and spread over it?' In making a response, we undoubtedly are both judge and party.

We have to admit, nevertheless, without either pride or modesty, that man is responsible at present for a notable share of the superficial aspects of the earth. At certain points, where he has persevered for a long while, this share is indeed pre-eminent. Through his labour and his attention he has created an infinite variety which expresses itself in those manifold 'lands' of various functions, those 'cantons' which bear the name of 'land' because they have come to constitute a unity of landscape and, closely related to it, the methods of its exploitation. Step by step, and not without errors, the inhabitant has turned each corner of virgin soil to a particular purpose, a better yield in human terms. To attain this better yield, the scene has been worked over in its soil, in its vegetable mantle, has been furnished with cultivated plants, with selected trees, with roads and houses. It has taken on a physiognomy suitable to human service.

Man the Author of Landscapes

Without man the surface of continents certainly would have developed some variety; but this would have been limited to vaster, less individualised divisions, more like the climatic or vegetable zones as they exist today particularly in the undeveloped regions, their very names indicating the imprecision of their outlines; the Brazilian sertão, the Argentine pampas, the Russian taiga, the Finnish tundra . . .

The richest variety of little regional landscapes or *pays* could develop only in zones of ancient and dense humanisation. Even today few regions of the earth have attained this stage of fine variety, the *pays* stage, one might say. The major part of western Europe and the Mediterranean area have reached it, and so have many regions of the Far East. In certain new continents some landscapes have begun to evolve diversity and, in some cases, can presume to take the name of *pays*.

Thus in French Canada *pays* have emerged in Beauce, in Charleroi, in Beupré. Not only has the *pays* emerged from the great monotonous forest which covered it and taken a certain 'human' appearance (in Beupré, the long *rangs* of several kilometres), but man himself, in turn, has been fashioned by the countryside. He has become a *paysan*, a man of the *paysage*, an *habitant*, as the French Canadian says so expressively, to such a point that he draws upon himself nicknames from his neighbours. The people of Canada's Beauce are called *jarrets noirs*, 'black hocks', because of the boggy soil they work: a symbol of the intimacy between the people and the land they have created. In their turn, these folk make fun maliciously of surrounding places. In Burgundy, we find the contrast between the *gratte-roches* or 'rock-scratchers' of the stony plateaus and the *culterreux* or 'dirt-bottoms' of the lower and marshy districts.

Nothing like this exists in the newer regions, such as the Canadian North-west, where the contacts between man and his chosen corner of the earth have not been so long. If local names, names of *pays* are to come up at all, they must reflect not only physical differences but that intimate and lengthy colloquy, carried on from generation to generation, between the same people and the same soil.

So it seems that the progressive humanisation of the earth translates itself into an ever greater wealth of variety. Civilisation does not evolve toward uniformity as much as one might think; it contains, rather, a major potential of variety. Ancient Gaul did not know the little *pays* of later times. They took shape, gradually, in proportion to the intensity of human labour, *pagus* after *pagus*. It is interesting to study the lives of

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these *pays*, which are the result of man's labours. Certain ones die; others are born, according to the evolution of the differentiating factors.

Thus the little canton of Ostabat, in the French Basque country, had developed traits which distinguished it from any other *pays*: for this longitudinal depression, on the junction of several highways which carried the crowds of pilgrims to the famous pass of Roncevalles, was filled with a vast number of *pensions* and hostels to lodge the pilgrims. The distinctive function of the place was that of lodging; and by this it acquired its proper name, Ostabat, the place of hostels.

Likewise the town of Grandval, in the Haut-Jura region, has established itself as a *paysage* thanks to the special craft of its *paysans*, the Grandvalliers. They were expert wagoners. Out of the tall fir trees of their mountains they manufactured those long, narrow, four-wheeled carriages which enabled them to export all sorts of merchandise from their plateau and made of them eventually the finest drivers on all the highways of France, and even of Europe. It was the wagoners of Granval who assured the military transports during Napoleon's Russian Campaign and, later on, the stage-coach services on all the French highways.

In the delta of the river Ebro the evolution was different. Once a region of swamps, frequented by hunters, fishermen, and smugglers, as well as by herdsmen who looked after the fierce bulls, this region became in the nineteenth century a *ribière*, a land of rice plantations; and the new settlers, the *ribierencs*, found themselves in sharp contrast with the *garrigens* of the nearby hills, the *garrigas* with their olive trees.

Thus it is undoubtedly man rather than nature who is responsible for the origin of those little *paysages*, which then become *pays* and represent a high degree of humanisation of the earth.

Living vestiges of the whole human caravan across time and space, these phenomena sum up the work of man and constitute a geographic balance-sheet of mankind. It is the task of human geography to separate and explain the various aspects of this balance-sheet to retrace the stages of the journey.

No other animal species, no matter how industrious, has up to this point so marked the face of the globe. If we should draw up a geography of the work of other living species, a geography of ants or beavers, for example, we would easily perceive the overwhelming superiority of the work of man, even though other species outstrip our own in number and in density. Animals are often content to strew the earth with their remains, their fossils, even to the point of forming, merely by their

accumulation, entire rocks. Man, on the contrary, has left only a few rare fossils, and, geologically, no human rock formations exist.

Man has been a *faber* to an amazing extent. Of his immense terrestrial work we shall remember here only those facts which are sufficiently important and constant to be visible on a large scale, determinative of the character of the 'land', or *paysagique*, 'landscapish' we are tempted to write despite the neologism, which is debatable but expressive.

The Role of the Spiritual

What are the factors or powers which have made man so industrious and have enabled him even to become the creator of landscapes?

In the first place, undoubtedly, it has been the necessities of his existence, the struggle for life. To wage this struggle, he made use of a peculiar faculty, his intelligence, which differs from those of all other beings and is far superior to them: a curious immaterial force, which has spread with man all over the surface of the earth, creating a veritable 'noosphere', as Father Teilhard de Chardin called it, subtly introduced amongst the other spheres: hydrosphere, atmosphere, biosphere. Despite its spiritual character, it has had its influence upon the other material spheres.

This new force at the disposition of man has been employed by him to battle and enthrall nature, to ensure his domination over matter. This is indeed the essence of dynamic human geography, the geography of the great struggles of man against the elements of nature: man and the forest, man and the mountains, man and the wind, man and the steppes . . .

Yet man has employed this force also for other purposes, detached from matter and corresponding to a peculiar internal capacity to fabulise: an astonishing labour of the mind, by and for itself, which takes man out of his material environment. It is this force, above all, which has created the vast domain of supranatural, supernatural ideologies and has established on earth the religious factor.

Our task here is not to explore the origins of this creation of the mind but to bring into relief its visual and material consequences. For this creation of the mind, religion, by definition so far remote from all things material, came to have major repercussions in the physical world. Every idea tends to become force and translates itself into facts. These have been powerful enough, occasionally, to leave such important and enduring marks that they became a physical part of the *paysage* and gave it its special character. Thus we find landscapes, shaped by man, where the

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hall-marks of this world of religious facts are more or less overpowering. There are regions, worked over by man, which are not uniquely the result of his struggle against a thankless and hostile nature but bear elements which cannot be explained merely by the adaptation of man to nature, by simple physical determinism. Other mechanisms have come into play, mechanisms emanating from man himself or, at least, from his religious life. To the question of Jean Brunhes with which we opened these pages, it is thus necessary to add a second one: What would the earth have been like without the divine and the sacred? In other words, what is the part of religious causality in the weaving of those striking regional landscapes with which man has covered his earth?

These hall-marks of the sacred are found in the different elements which compose regional landscapes. We have tried to order them according to the great labour fronts of the human caravan: as they determine the forms of settlement, of habitation, of exploitation, of movement. We do not deny that such a classification is arbitrary to a large extent. But it has the merit, in our opinion, of affording a great deal of visual simplification.

The Influence of Religion on the Form of Settlement

This religious factor does not have an equal bearing upon all the elements that compose the human landscape. Religion, at least through its exterior manifestations, is generally linked to the social, to the point that the religious act has been treated occasionally as a merely social act. In any case, this explains the fact that the intervention of the sacred has had such a vast influence upon the form of settlement. Religion, in fact, has encouraged the gregarious attitude in man. Between the two tendencies of separatism and gregariousness, religion has thrown its weight most frequently on the side of the latter, and it has undoubtedly contributed to making of man, among all living creatures, a being most devoted to the group life.

There have even been religions of a particularly urban character, which have thus been responsible, at least to some extent, for the rise of that curious phenomenon, the city. For many cities got their start as residences of the gods. This was so notably in ancient Egypt and in early Greek civilisation. The first centuries of Christianity left the majority of countryside outside the sphere of Christian influence. The countryside was the domain of the 'pagans', the *pagani*, who became *paysans*, or 'peasants', and only tardily did it benefit from parochial life. Mohammedanism likewise acquired and preserved its greatest purity only in the cities.

Many religions, no doubt, have produced recluses and hermits who, on the contrary, have sought isolation. How many religious establishments have chosen sites in deserted places! But this seclusiveness itself has been a factor in grouping, and anchorites and monks have been originators of agglomerations of many kinds.

It is probably rare that a system of settlement lacks any intimate association with a religious regime. We merely need to remember the totemic villages of many oceanic areas; the solar villages of ancient Scandinavia; the villages grouped round a central church and its nearby cemetery; or those dispersed settlements, with the religious edifice in the centre of dispersion, as visible as possible to all and serving as a rallying point for the dead . . .

Few settlements lack a more or less important religious support: even the nomadic groups of herdsmen have their mosque tents, and the amphibious settlements of marshlands or deltas have their chapels or temples on barges, as is the case in the delta of Tonkin or the lowlands of the Paraná. The house of the divinity, the temple, is one of the great meeting places, occupying, more often than not, the essential point round which the more or less circular ranks of habitations are placed. Has it been the point of departure, the first kernel of settlement, or has it been superimposed on extant settlements, conquering for itself the most eminent position? Rarely can we establish the genesis of a settlement and identify its first beginning.

The Church and the Rang in French Canada

Here, however, is an example particularly instructive from this point of view. The form of the original Canadian settlement is the *rang* or strip farm: i.e., a series of rectangular lots with their façades or fronts on the shorter sides, along a river or highway. The houses are constructed on these fronts, along the line of communication. They follow one another at regular intervals, with their lots of land in the rear. Originally, there was no plan behind this kind of arrangement. The allotment merely served the purpose of parcelling the clearings as they were gradually cut out of the forest.

Meanwhile, these strictly Catholic settlements felt the need of installing their churches during an early phase of their development. The church took its place in one of the *rangs*, on a lot of which it occupied the façade. Soon it became surrounded by annexes—presbyteries, schools, convents, and cemeteries—which gradually invaded the façades of some of the neighbouring lots. Some citizens came progressively to rejoin the *rang*

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of the church, to get closer to it. These particularly included old folk who would leave their property to their children and who desired, in their declining years, to follow the services more easily and to watch the numerous people flocking to the church. This kind of social life suited their conditions as persons living on past earnings, as one says in Canada. They bought small fractions of lots on the façades near the church. To distinguish them from the larger property holders of the *rangs*, they were called *emplacataires*; for they owned merely *emplacements* of very small dimensions, and not 'lots'.

Thus the church, by the mere fact of its physical installation, promoted a small revolution in the primitive quadrature. In this settlement, constituted merely by longitudinal dispersion, it inserted some curious forms, still arranged longitudinally, but marking already the beginning of agglomeration. Without the church the settlement would have consisted only of equal geometrical blocks. Geometry had to yield to the associative power of religion.

It goes without saying that such adjustments between the church and the *rangs* were not always made without difficulties. There were many conflicts over the location of the religious edifice and its appendages. The proximity of the church raised the value of adjacent lots, or at least the value of the façades, which could be parcelled and sold at a good price to the *emplacataires*. These disputes over the site of the church would even lead to schisms. Sometimes the church had to be moved to satisfy the needs of newer *rangs*, especially when the original places along the rivers and front lines were abandoned, and homes established themselves along the inner highways or *chemins de rangs*.

This associative power of the centre of a cult varies according to religions. In the same Canada the Protestant church did not provoke analogous modifications. The 'meeting house' did not exercise any such attraction; many of those houses, indeed, remained completely isolated. The grouping in long villages is much rarer among these Protestant communities. Even the dead remain dispersed; often there is no cemetery, and the mortal remains are buried on private property.

In French Catholic Canada, on the contrary, the cemetery is an important element of settlement. The day when there are more dead than living marks an important date in the not yet very long history of any village in that region: a date which is announced with a certain pride; for it signifies that the village is consolidated, that it will be difficult henceforth to displace it. The dead have made it definitely sedentary. The presence

of a well-furnished cemetery gives proof of the stability and vitality of the settlement. The families feel themselves bound to their soil by their dead. They emigrate less easily, and the phase of the pioneer settlement, still fraught with precariousness, is definitely over.

The Geographical Role of the Dead

Strange is the role of the defunct, who bear down so heavily upon the geography of the living—as, for that matter, the thought of death weighs upon the whole psychology of man.

Of all the creatures living upon this earth only man appears to have the certain knowledge that he will some day cease to live. The theme of death at the end of life has occupied in an amazing way man's imagination and, especially, his religious thought. For the majority of men the departed are not those who have ceased to be but those who have entered into another life. It has even been held that this very certainty about death's unfailing advent must lead men to the imaginary creation of future lives and thereby to an immense camouflage of the end of real life.

Geographically, this pre-occupation with the dead has translated itself materially and visually into a series of facts, so numerous and important that they have become part of the landscape. Thus the dead, who are no longer with us, are often the most important occupants of the earth. For the idea of death is one of the essential geographical characteristics of the human species.

There are houses of death, cities of death, voyages of death. Any geography of man's habitat, i.e., of the constructive work of man, which failed to take into account the labour on behalf of the dead, would be a truncated geography.

Death and the dead claim their place. Throughout history, there have been civilisations of which we know scarcely more than the life beyond. Many races have left only mortuary landscapes. In Egypt, the living resided in provisional huts of earth or rush, of which nothing remains, while the dead had enduring abodes of brick or stone. Whole districts were set aside and furnished for the dead, especially islands, where cumuli or hypogea, often placed as far to the west as possible, saluted the sunset where light and life are spent. The island of Iviza, the smallest of the Balearics, appears to have had this sepulchral function during the Carthaginian epoch. This explains the importance and wealth of the cemeteries excavated there, which are out of proportion to the small size and poverty of the island. Its human landscape was dominated,

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undoubtedly, by the life of the Great Beyond. Certain valleys of Egypt and the region of Palmyrus offer an analogous picture.

Houses of Divinity

Often overwhelming labour has been executed for the dead. Yet the most gigantic constructive effort ever engaged in on the surface of the earth has not been concerned with the lodging of people, alive or dead. It has been lavished on the shelter of a strange being whom the majority of humans recognise above them, the Divinity.

'He who is not of this world' occupies, geographically, a major place in this world. All materials, all styles have been put to work to receive Him. Often it is only for Him that different types of architecture and the most important methods of building are devised. The home of the divinity is as prominent in the history of dwelling (history of art!) as it is in its geography.

The divinity has often invaded even the homes of the living. In Africa, there seems to be a certain connexion between round houses and the people devoted to zoolatrous cults, while square dwellings appear to be linked particularly to astrological religions. In other places we find ritualistic orientations of the façades, sometimes towards the setting sun, as in Madagascar, sometimes toward the sunrise, and various other devices to draw upon the house the protection of the deities (e.g., the roofs, with crooked angles, and the angular doors of Chinese houses).

Of course, the habitation responds first of all to a primordial need for shelter: Man is of a living species which requires a lodging place. He is not adapted to an integral life in the open air because his body is not so constituted as to resist, without clothing, all the variations of climate. The home is built in order to create that human 'microclimate' which, with regard to heat, light, and biological environment, is most favourable to the race.

But at the same time the house creates a spiritual environment; I should be tempted to say, a religious climate. Fustel de Coulanges has definitely shown that the Roman dwelling was 'first of all a scene of a domestic cult'. How many homes have served, more or less, the same purpose, among the Berbers, Madagascans, Chinese, Slovaks, and other races?

The Role of Religion in Nomadism or Sedentary Life

Quite often this domestic cult has made the home fire, once lighted, unmovable; in other words, it has fixed the home. Exposed to the chronic

instability of climate, of sunlight, of crops and harvests, mankind might well have been driven to a chance nomadism, governed only by the seasonal moving of livestock between complementary zones, as so many animal species have adopted it. Perhaps it is due to the intervention of religion that man, in certain cases, has been able to overcome the difficulties of sedentary life, which implies foresight, reserves, and storehouses so as to avoid the hazards of the territory. The fact of stability has opened an ever widening horizon of the concept of appropriation, with its limits and frontiers which, for a long time, maintained a sacred character. The religious idea thus contains within itself stabilising qualities which have contributed towards making the human species sedentary and which have incited it to undergo the efforts and sacrifices necessary to live in one place and to resist the appeal of 'greener pastures' elsewhere.

On the other hand, the religious idea contains virtually a great mobilising force. Displacements of men are not governed by natural needs alone. There have been explorations for divine or holy reasons, sacred discoveries, voyages to seek the place where the sun rises or sets, quests for promised lands or lost paradises. Such are conveyed by the tales of the Argonauts or of the hunt for the Golden Fleece. The distances covered by oceanic navigators for ritualistic reasons (Potlatch, etc.) are truly astonishing. The immense importance of pilgrimages, crusades, and missions is well known; and how many people live but for the sake of embarking, once in their life time, on a great voyage: St. James of Compostela and those who have gone to the Holy Land, to Mecca, to Benares, and, in our times, to Lourdes, Lisieux, Sainte Anne de Beaupré, or Fatima . . .

Religion and Demography

A great many attitudes and inclinations of man are understandable only if one takes into account those ideas of the Beyond which are conveyed by the various religions. Demography is filled with precepts and tendencies of religious origin, which may favour or restrain the birth rate, increase or decrease the number of marriages, teach respect or disdain for life or for death; bring human groups into ferocious opposition or fraternal association. The variations in the human effective force thus depend, at least partly, on spiritual imperatives able to thwart or to reinforce the natural factors.

These manifold spiritual exigencies have not made themselves felt everywhere in the same manner and with the same force, neither in space nor

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in time. What kind of geography, what kind of history of the realm of the spirit should we know?

To begin with, we should make a distinction between people with clergy and people without clergy. In the direction indicated by the research of Gabriel Le Bras, we should, then, draw up statistical lists of religious vocations and practices, which would enable us to establish exactly the comparative density of religious facts.¹

The Limits of Religious Imperatives in Geography

How and in what measure does this religious imperative impose itself upon the geographic domain? To what power has man submitted most often both himself and the landscape he has marked by his presence? Has it been Nature, immense, external, inert; or rather his internal capacity to fabulise and, more particularly, his religious imagination?

The origin and the mechanism of this twofold influence escape us more often than not. Besides, it is possible that these two causalities are not so independent from and opposed to each other as they appear to be today. No doubt, there always has been the possibility of correspondences between religious facts and physical factors, with ritualistic precepts sanctioning or even reinforcing natural predispositions.

This original association of the two 'determinisms' may escape us today. Changes or later extensions of various factors are apt to obscure the primitive agreements. Physical conditions may change, or, on the other hand, religious precepts may be transformed by an evolution of rites, and the accord between the two, clear at the beginning, is blurred.

In certain cases, a natural 'wisdom' would reveal itself, with which mankind would fall in line and which, subsequently, religious thought would endow with its special authority. Later on such 'wisdom' might cease to appear wise, and its anachronism might incite us to believe, perhaps wrongly so, in a religious derivation. In reality such 'wisdoms' of man correspond to variable attitudes, to concepts—we might be tempted to say, to mentalities. It is to these that we must resort in order to explain certain geographical facts. We are faced here with interventions of a different kind, not religious in the strict sense of the word, but rather of a psychological character. To make a clear distinction between these various attitudes of the spirit would require an unusual

¹cf. the report of the Third International Conference of Religious Sociology at Breda, Holland, in the *Senola Cattolica* (Milan), LXXIX, 1951, pp. 234-44.

cf. also G. Le Bras, 'La Géographie Religieuse'. *Annales d'Histoire Sociale*, 1945, pp. 8-112.

amount of sagacity, capable of relinquishing its own logical habits: Other kinds of logic (they have even been called 'pre-logic') no doubt have dominated humanity over those long epochs in which customs and standards, later conserved in their entirety or modified only slightly, were first established.

One of our foremost collaborators, Georges Hardy, has formulated, in our *Collection of Human Geography*, a psychological geography which opens up new routes of discovery. We have ourselves given examples in our *Géographie et Religions*: the type of house constructed on a foundation of piles does not always seem to have been conditioned by reasons of natural adaptation, i.e., it does not seem to be linked exclusively to the requirements of low ground and marshes, but to correspond to psychological relations which man has developed between himself and the earth. The latter was considered by certain peoples as a baneful domain, reserved for hostile powers and for death: it was thought prudent to avoid all direct contact with it. What mentality lies hidden within this attitude; what complex, in the sense of psychoanalysis, has been able to dictate this imperative?

Likewise, when the Scandinavians constructed their villages and aligned their houses in the direction of the 'rotation' of the sun, they may have been influenced by a solar cult or by causalities unknown to us. At any rate, this custom corresponded to their general system of thought, to their mentality, one might say, to their spiritual age, and, no doubt, to their social status.

Many facts of today are relics of vanished mentalities. One might ask, for instance, why, in western Agenais (region of Marmande) people build a type of low house, with wooden frame and only one story, with large fronts open at the gables, while in eastern Agenais (region of Serres) they construct their houses entirely of stone, with two stories adorned with galleries and great staircases. Surely this difference is not due to natural causes and conditions, which are identical in the two regions, but rather to spiritual attitudes *vis-à-vis* materials or elements, which we are no longer able to reconstruct but which could spring from religious impulses.

It seems, for example, that for a long time odours and perfumes had religious meanings which we are no longer able to grasp. Good and evil thus were supposed to have different odours: The expression, 'to die in the odour of sanctity', undoubtedly testifies to this belief. Improper suggestions were thought to have bad odours which ought to be driven

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out. Hence the important role of purifications through perfumes, fumigations, and disinfections. This also explains the ancient importance of perfumes, revealed by the fact that they were among the first products to enter into the cycle of large-scale commerce. Since the tenth century there has been a traffic in incense, from Hadhramaut to the Hindu temples, in exchange for numerous odorous goods of sub-Himalayan India, such as musk. The antiquity of traffic in myrrh is likewise well established (cf. the offerings of the Three Magi). The world of odours has been full of the sacred, and there was once, without doubt, an 'age of odours'. Our modern psychological complexes in regard to odours are not the same. Is it that our senses no longer perceive the odour of the good and the sacred? Or are our interpretations different? In any case, the geography of odorous plants and the commerce in such products have changed radically.

A contemplation of the religious factor in appraising a datum in human geography does not afford any self-sufficient explanation. It rather carries the problem into other fields. The task of the geographer, obviously, consists in circumscribing, as closely as possible, the part played by religion. In spite of these inevitable limitations, there remains a large balance of geographical facts, inscribed into the earth in such density as to constitute landscapes, whose religious origin cannot be denied. Are these facts beyond the reach of science simply because they do not fit any physical or economic explanations? Here once again we encounter that irritating problem of determinism.

At any rate, external causes act upon man only through the intermediary of their psychological interpretation. Ideas and, especially, beliefs are interposed everywhere between man and the products of nature.

If certain races face their homes toward west, like the Madagascans, they do so, perhaps, because they like to enjoy the benefit of the setting sun or because they are thus better protected from the rainy winds of the monsoon period, blowing from the east. But they may also be motivated by a respect for the general movement of the universe, which to them seems reflected in the course of the sun. It would seem monstrous to such people to fail to submit to the sacred mechanism of the universe—and this is where the religious imperative comes into the picture.

Which of these motivations is the decisive one? As a matter of fact, it is a rather general custom in Madagascar to have the home face west, and this is true even where the rainy winds come from the west, as is the case on the southern coast of the great island. Besides, the Madagascans follow the direction of the sunset at all the great events of their lives. When

a Madagascan dies, he is carried out of his home, his feet carefully turned toward the west; and he is buried in that same position. The inhabitants of the great island call themselves, quite simply, 'those who look toward the Sunset'. Perhaps these customs reflect the reality of those ancient migrations which carried the people of Malaysia as far as the African isle in search of an Eternal Sunset.

There have been psychological states in which the sacred and the natural are extremely confused. The modern geographer cannot reject such complex causalities under the pretext that they do not correspond to his logical and simple way of thinking.

In their efforts to manage the earth many human groups have been guided, and are still guided, by complex motivations in which the natural is curiously tinged by the spiritual.

It was Lévi Bruhl who raised the question of whether mystical knowledge, so wide-spread in former times, should not be considered as the reflex of an imperceptible reality, and whether our mind has not been deformed by the modern disciplines. 'People who have not yet overused logical knowledge and the concept of causality', he wrote, 'show an astonishingly well developed mystical attitude. Among civilised peoples, this attitude has been largely smothered by conceptual thought.'

The difficult research of religious geography, which we should like to see pursued by young geographers, obviously cannot aim at satisfying the believer any more than the disbeliever. The great task ahead consists in exploring, with minute care, with wisdom, and with affection the motive powers which have driven the human species to this point of industry and creativeness in fashioning geographic landscapes.

By HEINRICH FICHTEAU

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE MEDIEVAL EMPIRE

When we say Europe, what do we mean? Perhaps it has never been more necessary than it is today to apply not emotion but scientific method in answering this question. If we ask the politicians they will tell us of the continuity of Europe and its function in world politics. The geographer will speak of the special qualities of the soil and the flora. Might we not usefully regard the map of Europe from the point of view of the other, so much more extensive continents? From that point of view, would the continent of Europe seem to be an annex of Asia or Africa? No, certainly not. There are grounds of paramount importance which make such a view impossible: reasons, determined by the common history of the European nations and the common civilisation which was the product of their historical development.

Accordingly, the common efforts and common destinies of the European nations throughout the centuries constitute the materials we have at hand when we try to answer the question: what was Europe, what is it now, and what may it become? Here we are confronted by the fact

that the course of history is determined by general forces, and at times controlled by individual decisions. We cannot deny that many men had power to make choices between various possibilities, such choice often being one favourable or unfavourable as the case might be to the destiny of the future Europe. A choice like that was granted to the Germanic peoples who fought on the side of Attila and equally to those who followed the Roman Aetius; to the Visigothic counts who led their Arabs across the Straits of Gibraltar, and to the king who withstood the invaders without hope of victory. In the same way, Charlemagne might have refused the crown of the Roman Empire. But he accepted it, in spite of the fact that it imposed upon him duties, the performance of which exceeded the powers of a Frankish ruler.

Up to this time Europe had existed only as a geographic concept invented by the classic world, or perhaps it was merely a unit of the imperial administration. Even after Charlemagne's time this was true for the Byzantine rulers: *Evropa* or *Dysis* was the designation for the complex of *themata* or 'provinces' in Italy and the Balkans. No one took notice of the fact that in the meantime Europe had found itself, intellectually as well as politically. The Frankish court had proclaimed the independence of the West from Byzantine tutelage, several years before the coronation in A. D. 800, and even more plainly by the fact of the coronation itself. This date marks the birth of Europe, an opinion which the sources corroborate: for since the time of Charlemagne the term Europe, meaning practically the same as it does today, was used in the Frankish kingdom. It signified a totality composed of many peoples, including Spain and England, which were outside Charlemagne's orbit, but not yet Scandinavia, which was still pagan, nor yet the Byzantine Balkans.

Of course Europe did not issue like Pallas Athene fully armed from the head of a 'father of gods and men'. Men of genius may hasten the course of history but they are not the final cause of changes. It is our task, often an onerous one, to examine the sources for all possible indications of ideas which may have existed in the minds of a few men during many centuries and then were suddenly transformed into concrete acts. But the historian should at the same time confront these ideas with reality. For the practical trends of political and social life are mostly quite different from ideal demands, often they contradict the ideal, and only rarely does a situation arise in which practical trends and ideal demands complement each other. Even if they do, the right moment may be missed, the leading men of the time may lack the power to make decisions and draw conclusions.

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But this is just the place where the great personality can act. And when he does, a great hour, historically speaking, has struck.

Such was the hour when Alexander the Great spread out before the eyes of his Macedonians and Greeks the riches of the East—with ideas quite other than those of his soldiers. His was the idea of the oneness of all humanity, which he wanted to see united into one great state. His, also, was the idea of the god-like dignity and power of a ruler over such a united world. This world seemingly extended only from Gibraltar to the river Indus, an error which had very dire consequences. Alexander failed, but he left a two-fold heritage to a later day: the barrier between Europe and Asia had been broken down and the idea of a world-state had been brought to the attention of the West. Here the Stoics stood for unity as a philosophic idea; but also as political concept it was to be revived later on. Roman senators had visited Alexander in Babylon, and it was Rome that fell heir to his realm. One country after the other succumbed to the new power, and soon the Roman Empire seemed to extend to the boundaries of the civilised world.

This empire remained in theory the rule of one city over other cities, the responsibility for the peace of the empire devolving upon the citizens of Rome. The first citizen of Rome was the emperor, a model for all other citizens. Yet the concept of Alexander could not be extinguished; Constantine wore the diadem of the great Macedonian; he no longer ruled as a Roman, but as a ruler of all men, having the same rights and duties with respect to the universal state. Constantine, like Alexander, undertook to war against the Persians, who were considered dangerous rivals in the field of claims for universality. Since the time of Sapor the First, the title of the Persian kings was 'King of Iran and Non-Iran', and the monarchy was closely linked up with a universal religion, that of Zoroaster. In the Roman Empire, too, the deities of the various cities were now to give way before the 'highest god' of the Stoics, who was soon replaced by the god of the Christians. The Christian creed got its security from the state, in order that it, in turn, might secure the state, bear witness to the equality of all human beings, and extol the emperor as the 'Saviour of humanity' and the 'Vicar of Christ'. The pagan deities of the cities were still tolerated; but one city above all others should be specially consecrated to the Christian god: Constantinople, the new capital, bearing, according to the pattern set by Alexander, the name of its founder.

Thus Christian doctrine was the bond that held together the provinces tending to cut loose from the empire; the bishops became the functionaries

of the state, the ruler turned into the 'preceptor of all the peoples', who summoned the councils there to arbitrate theological controversies. It was a form of 'Caesaro-papacy' where the Pope played the role of a statism in the great drama of imperial rule. But it was not possible to eliminate the Pope altogether. The Church organised itself into a fixed hierarchy of ranks and grades following the pattern of the state, and in this hierarchy the Pope claimed a sovereignty similar to that of the Emperor in the state—at first only in theory, later on in actual practice. Conditions for the implementation of these claims were much more favourable in the West than in the East which was dominated by the ancient and renowned patriarchates of Constantinople, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria, and the strong rule of imperial power. The great invasions destroyed the political unity of the West, and nothing remained but the Church and its spiritual head, the Pope. Even so, the idea of the Empire was a strong factor, inasmuch as it recalled the past and promised hope for the future. For a short time it seemed as if a great Emperor of the East would realise such hopes. But Justinian's attempts failed, leaving behind them among the population of Italy a strong resentment against the rule of Byzantium which had conducted itself no better than the German conquerors.

Accordingly the gap between idea and reality had grown wider and 'Christianity' was no longer identical with Empire. The Christian 'Romans' were now condemned to live among Arian 'barbarians' who determined their political destiny. The Germanic peoples had left the Romans their faith and their church, yet the theological opinions of the West differed from those of the East. It was a time of confusion in what was supposed to be the divine order, and the literature of Christian Europe is full of laments. Yet brighter spots there were too: one of the Germanic nations, the Franks, had adopted the Roman creed and derived great political gain from their decision; for the entire non-German population of Gallia preferred their domination to that of the Arians. Was it possible that the Catholic Franks might offer to the Church and the Papacy that which was so essential and could no longer be afforded them by the Eastern Empire, namely protection against political oppression?

A long time was to elapse till matters had advanced so far. Charles Martel denied the request of the Pope; he did not want to break with the Lombards who supported him in his battles against the Arabs. Not until the next generation was the alliance between the Franks and the Papacy consummated: Pepin assumed those duties which the Byzantine 'Exarch' of Italy could no longer render. He delivered Rome from the danger of an

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invasion by the Lombards, and for this received from the Pope the title of '*Patricius*', which properly belonged to the Exarch. Stephen the Second had in reality not broken off relations with the Eastern Emperor, only with his functionaries, and yet that was after all a break with the Emperor. It was a temporary solution which for the time being left matters in the balance. It was up to the future to decide who was to be the defender of Christianity and thus the defender of the Pope as well.

The two highest powers of the Middle Ages have been compared to the two foci of an ellipse; they might move further apart or approach each other, but in order that the form be preserved, both had to be present. This ellipse never became a circle, either in the time of Constantine or in the eighth century. Of course many folk dreamed that the Pope was the real master of Europe to whom already Constantine had given the power here in Rome. Yet the facts spoke otherwise. If ever an empire of Christian peoples was to reappear as a political entity, a more powerful ruler was needed than the Pope, who scarcely commanded the obedience of all the nobles in his own city.

Nor did the emperors of the East have this power, aside from the fact that they represented views on the worship of the images different from those held by the Pope and the majority of Christendom. Byzantium had been forced to confine its rule to an infinitesimal portion of its former dominions, and in the streets of Constantinople the mob often held sway. And yet the emperors clung to the fiction that they were regents of the Church and of the whole world on the model set up by Constantine. So much the worse for the world if it would no longer submit to the word of the 'Lord of the world' and only 'rebels' and 'wild beast' took the place of the imperial officials. Soon, so the Byzantine ambassadors warned at the courts of princes, the ever-victorious Emperor would bend the stiff necks of kings before him. Humbly the barbarians would appear before the 'Vicar of Christ' to receive his orders and learn the first principles of civilisation.

As for the political threats, certainly no one in the West took them seriously. And yet, the Franks were hit on a sore spot: here was the power, there the legitimate claim; here was the anxious desire to learn, there the wealth of cultural attainments. How much labour, how many pains did the friends of Charlemagne expend to revive science and art under his rule! As for Charlemagne himself—one need not repeat the anecdote that he had written tablets placed under his pillow at night. Probably this tale is an invention, but it is nevertheless touching that the victor of so many

campaigns did not disdain to apply his great will-power and his modest knowledge of Latin on the emendation of ancient texts.

It is a fact that the elder civilisation was carried over to the court of Charlemagne without being entirely understood nor having anything new added to it. But this achievement was sufficiently important to take its place worthily beside the political ones of the Frankish ruler. For indeed it was in itself a political achievement, and it prepared the way for a more important one. I mean that the 'Carolingian renaissance' was to prove the cultural legitimacy of the Frankish court, which intended to show itself not a barbarian court but the centre of Christian civilisation. Not until this had become an incontestable fact could Charlemagne venture a direct confrontation with Byzantium.

The matter could not be settled in the field so familiar to the Franks, that is, on the field of war. A campaign waged against Constantinople was impossible for practical reasons, even after the victory over the Avars in the valley of the Danube. And though the re-establishment of a universal empire was anticipated, this empire was to serve the cause of peace. Charlemagne did not conquer all the lands in which there were Christians; but the weight of his authority was sufficient to enable him to exercise the functions of an emperor in place of the Byzantine ruler. A Frankish treatise (*de Officiis*) tells us that not only he who rules the whole world could be an Emperor, but that he who occupies an important position in it could be too. From this point of view, Charlemagne's friends regarded him as the ruler of Christendom, as an *Imperator* who lacked nothing but the crown. In Rome, at least in the time of Pope Hadrian, one was a bit more careful, but it is very questionable whether Hadrian's successor, Leo III, in reality had as large a share in the plan of the coronation of Charlemagne as many scholars have assumed.

We have now arrived at the famous quarrel of the historians concerning the coronation of Charlemagne as Emperor. However much paper has been blackened on this subject, we do not believe that it was wasted, for every fact, no matter how insignificant, is valuable if it can throw light on such a focal point of history. It must however be stated that the scholars who have treated this theme have not always opened up new sources. Often they have contented themselves with interpreting the existing documents in accordance with their personal judgments. But even these reports may be examined with profit for they remind us of the limitations of the knowledge we may acquire. The personal point of view can never be entirely eliminated; in the strictest sense of the term there is

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no such thing as historical objectivity. It was a vain effort on the part of certain scholars of the past century to do historical research according to the patterns set by the natural sciences; for did not these sciences themselves for a long time overestimate their own objectivity? Even the physicist cannot completely exclude his own personality when he prepares for an experiment and observes its progress.

We may, however, claim that our understanding of this problem is progressing both as regards the interpretation of the sources and the unearthing of more of them. Besides the established historical texts, archives and liturgical texts have more recently been examined, and the author of these pages has attempted to let the archaeological remains speak for themselves. We now know that the coronation of Charlemagne was not the result merely of the temporary difficulties in which the Pope was involved, as several scholars thought. On the contrary, the event already cast its shadow before, not only as regards the ideas and plans of the leading personalities, but no less in their actions. It is these actions that we should like to discuss; for if we look at them and their inter-relations as a whole, we get a clear picture of the purposes behind them.

Charlemagne had not been educated by scholars. He lived in accordance with the practical political demands of his dominions, and the prestige of his own person and his family's. Perhaps the past of the Germanic sagas was nearer to his heart than the history of the Roman Empire and its theological foundations. It is unlikely that it was his own idea to aspire to a dignity for which his language did not even have a name. It is true that Charlemagne was not only the King of the Franks but also King of the Lombards and Protector of the Romans, but this threefold honour did not need to be summed up in a more elevated title. It is wrong to speak of a 'Germanic idea of empire', as contrasted with the Roman and Christian imperial concept. None of the Germanic peoples had the notion that the ruler of several kingdoms should be designated Emperor, and even the *bretwalda* of the Anglo-Saxons was called *Imperator* not by themselves but by the neighbouring Celts. Dominion over a number of kingdoms was practised rather as dominion over a number of landed estates. This was the concept of the Merovingians, and the fact that it was not foreign to Charlemagne, not even after A.D. 800, is indicated by his last will and testament. He distributed his kingdoms among his sons as a nobleman would distribute his lands. There was not a word about the imperial dignity.

Charlemagne had not been brought up by scholars but he sought to

learn from them, and what they taught could be supplemented by object lessons in his travels through Italy. As early as 774 he became familiar with the buildings of the defunct Empire and with the hopes of the papacy for Rome and the Church. Both were bound up with the spot Charlemagne first visited when he entered Rome: the chapel where the Emperor Constantine was supposed to have been baptised by Pope Silvester I; after which ceremony the Pope had received the Empire of the West as a gift (according to the document forged by papal functionaries). The chapel was in the Lateran palace and the palace itself was actually a gift of Constantine whose monument was here shown to visitors. When one spoke of these things to Charlemagne, he was surely not allowed to forget the fundamental meaning of the imperial dignity and could contrast the actual state of Christianity with the ideal picture. Indeed, the demands of practical politics itself indicated to the Frankish king the idea of giving his attention to the successors of the Roman Emperors. The son of the king of the Lombards had fled to Constantinople and there had assumed the title of '*Patricius*', the title used by Charlemagne in his own edicts after the conquest of the Lombards. In the following year there was even a Byzantine fleet ready to take this enemy of Charlemagne back to Italy. The undertaking was never carried out, but Charlemagne surely understood even at this date that he must not lose sight of Byzantine claims to universality.

Charlemagne had no fleet with which to wage war against this adversary, and a land expedition was bound to be stopped, after long and gruelling marches, before the impregnable walls of Constantinople. Accordingly a diplomatic adjustment was sought, and in 780 the death of the Emperor and a political upheaval at Byzantium presented an opportunity. No longer did the enemies of the cult of the images rule at Byzantium, but its defenders; and thus the papacy had an opportunity to resume the relations so long intermitted. It also appeared that the claims for the universal rule of Byzantium were now no longer valid, for the empire there was governed by a woman, Irene, who was regent for her minor son, Constantine VI. Such a government could never fulfill the demands made of an emperor: 'The feebleness of the feminine sex and the mutability of their hearts does not permit a woman to put herself in the highest rank in matters of faith and position, rather she is obliged to submit to masculine authority'—such was the point of view of the Frankish court, where the masculine authority of Charlemagne was prepared to occupy the highest rank.

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In the beginning there was an alliance, and the Frankish ruler promised to marry his daughter Rotrud to the young Constantine VI. This alliance lasted for six years, until Irene let it be known that she had not forgotten the former claims of the emperors to be the leaders of Christendom. She called at Nicaea a Council of all the members of the Christian Church. This was to sit in the same place and be conducted in the same manner as the Council the great Constantine had summoned for the discussion of Arianism. But now it was a woman who sat at the head of the assembly of 350 bishops, which included the representatives of the Pope. It was not for him to protest against such a course of action, for the theological differences could well be settled in the end. But if Irene signed the resolutions of the Council and thereby made them obligatory, where did this leave Charlemagne, who had deserved so well of the Church in arduous battles against the enemies of Rome and Christendom and thereby was surely entitled to preside at this assembly?

In this year, 787, the differences between Byzantium and Europe enter a new and decisive stage. It was not so much an armed dispute, though that too followed after the events of Nicaea. Charlemagne refused to send his daughter to Constantine VI, who then undertook a campaign against the partisans of the Frankish king in Lower Italy. Still more important, however, was the spiritual opposition to Byzantium, no light task considering that the Pope refused to lend his aid from the ideological side. Charlemagne had to rely on his friends at the Court, that handful of men who nevertheless represented all Europe: there was Alcuin the Anglo-Saxon, Theodulf the Visigoth, Angilbert the Frank, Arno the Bavarian, Paulus Diaconus the Lombard. These men, together with some others, made up the circle of imperialist clerics, who called Charlemagne leader of the 'chosen people', 'a second David', and protector of the *imperium Christianum*.

Their efforts were directed principally against the Council of Nicaea, the minutes of which were not at all easy to obtain. Only after a lapse of two years could a Latin translation be procured, and it was defective. Thereupon Charlemagne informed the Pope in a *Capitulare de imaginibus* of his own decision concerning the cult of images, adopting the procedure used by Byzantium in making the resolutions of Nicaea the law of the land. It is not necessary to stress the fact that this *Capitulare* defended ideas quite different from those held at Nicaea, but it is also clear that Pope Hadrian was not willing, for the sake of the Franks, to recant opinions which he had approved. In the meantime, one of Charlemagne's friends, most

probably Theodulf, had completed that famous polemic which is known as the *Libri Carolini*. This was the size of a ponderous tome and its contents were heavy with scholarship. The preface claims that the volume is the work of Charlemagne himself and gives an indication of the contents: an attack against the rulers of the East who not only defend false theological doctrine, but make themselves into idols, calling themselves 'divine' and ruling 'together with God'. When this work was read aloud to Charlemagne, he uttered words of praise at the important passages, which a cleric noted on the margin of the pages. Valuable testimony this, the exact words of the ruler in a situation which was surely more foreign to him than the practical administration of his domains. But Charlemagne was ready to turn into a theologian if his role as protector of Christendom demanded it.

That he was indeed this protector was to be proven by the Council that Charlemagne summoned to Frankfurt in 794 as a counter-weight to Nicaea. The king himself was in the chair, gave explanations of the disputed paragraphs—surely according to notes that had been put in his hand—and uttered the decisive words in the presence of the bishops of his kingdoms, the delegates from England, and the papal legates. The resolutions actually adopted were not quite in conformity with all this display of power, for the assembly could not make up its mind to relinquish more than one single principle of the Council of Nicaea. Notwithstanding, the venture was successful from the point of view of demonstrating Charlemagne's position, and another trump had been played in the game with Byzantium. It was not the only trump the Frankish king had in his hand.

A few months later the court moved to Aix-la-Chapelle, the new capital city, the construction of which had probably begun in 788. This fact does not appear of particular note in this connexion, but it is, nonetheless, of great importance. Up to this time the Frankish rulers had had no fixed capital; they travelled about in their domains according to the Germanic custom, in contrast with the practice of the Romans and also of the Popes. I have already mentioned the Lateran Palace which was but a modest residence compared with the *sacrum palatium* of Constantinople, situated between the Hippodrome and the Sea of Marmora. It was considered sacred, like all else touching the Emperor, and like his edicts, the *sacrae praecepta*. The clerics of the Synod at Frankfurt had objected to this cult; but to our astonishment we hear them speak of the 'sacred palace' and the 'sacred edicts' of Charlemagne. Up to now such language had been unheard of; it gives a new significance to the words of the poets who

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proclaimed at the same time that another Rome was being built at Aix-la-Chapelle and represented their ruler in the pose of a classic sovereign who founds a city, *disponens venturae moenia Romae*.¹

Nova Roma had, however, since the days of yore been the name of the capital which Constantine had founded for himself on the Bosphorus. When one looks at the facts, Aix-la-Chapelle was a very modest competitor of Constantinople. But the Middle Ages were used to expressing themselves in symbols, a branch could stand for a whole forest, a city gate serve as an abbreviation for an entire city. Viewed symbolically, the buildings of Aix-la-Chapelle might well represent a whole capital city.

But not every building erected by Charlemagne in Aix was such an abbreviation. There was one building which constituted a precise copy, viz., the centre of the 'sacred palace', the place where the throne of the emperor was set. This was copied from the *Chrysotriklinos* or *Christotriklinos* built by Justinian's successor. It was both throne-room and church, with a large mosaic representing the Christus. Under this picture, however, was not an altar but the throne, and on great occasions even the old throne of the sanctified divine Constantine was shown. All these things corresponded to the ideas of the emperors as to their honour and glory, for here they themselves prayed to God and here they allowed their subjects to worship them as demi-gods.

The *Chrysotriklinos* had the shape of an octagon crowned by a central dome. On the ground floor there were eight vaulted niches; the one in the east contained the throne which I just mentioned. Above the niches there was a gallery, above that, the sixteen windows of the dome. Thus the structure belonged to a very special type of church architecture, of which only three examples are preserved: the Church of Saints Sergius and Bacchus in Constantinople, San Vitale in Ravenna, and the Palatine Chapel in Aix-la-Chapelle. In fact the *Chrysotriklinos* is more closely akin in some respects to Charlemagne's church than it is to the other two: for example, they both carry on top of the dome a golden 'apple', which in reality is a globe, the symbol of the dominion over the world.

¹For a fuller Documentation on Charlemagne, Byzantium, and Aix-la-Chapelle, see: Fichtenau, *Mitteilungen des Instituts fuer Geschichtsforschung*, vol. LIX. Vienna, 1951. Fichtenau, *Das Karolingische Imperium*. Zürich, 1949. Revised Italian edition, *L'Impero di Carlo Magno*. Bari, 1951. The same subject is treated somewhat differently in the very scholarly book of the late L. Halphen: *Charlemagne et l'Empire Carolingien*, 2nd ed. Paris, 1949. On the coronation of Charlemagne, cf. address given at Glasgow, 1949, by F. L. Ganshof: 'The Imperial Coronation of Charlemagne, Theories and Facts', Glasgow University Publ., LXXIX, 1949. For a later period, see the excellent work by R. Folz, *Le Souvenir et la Légende de Charlemagne dans l'Empire Germanique Medieval*. Paris, 1950.

Art historians have drawn our attention to the fact that the chapel at Aix-la-Chapelle is related to San Vitale but they could not solve the riddle why that particular building and no other had attracted the interest of Master Odo, the architect of the chapel. We can solve this riddle when we think of Charlemagne's conflict with Byzantium and read in the *Libri Carolini* that Charlemagne had his ambassadors report to him in detail about the churches of Constantinople. Ravenna had been in past times the centre of Byzantine rule in Italy, and here we find the only building in the manner of the *Chrysotriklinos*, in a region where the power of the Franks was effective. If Charlemagne had sent his architect to Constantinople to study the construction of the most sacred part of the 'sacred palace', the poor man would scarcely have found the way back to Aix-la-Chapelle.

The *Chrysotriklinos* was both a throne-room and a church, and the same holds for the chapel at Aix-la-Chapelle, though here the accent has shifted: in Constantinople the throne is the more important requisite, in Aix-la-Chapelle it was the altar of Christ and that of Mary. But in Charlemagne's chapel the throne, standing in the west of the gallery had its function too: we know that he crowned his son Louis there. This shifting of the accent is quite in accordance with the teachings of the *Libri Carolini*, which intended to give honour to God before all else. These writings emphasised that the Byzantine ruler misused his office, and therefore called him sometimes 'king' of the Greeks instead of Emperor. Such views found their corroboration in the chapel at Aix-la-Chapelle which was to show that here a truly Christian lord ruled.

Books are written in less time than it takes to build such buildings: the vaulting of the chapel was completed only in 798 but the plans for it surely were made as far back as those for the *Libri Carolini*. Again we go back to the decisive years after the Council of Nicaea which paved the way for what was done, seemingly as improvisation, in 800. A further indication of the trend is also apparent: since the time of the Synod at Frankfurt Charlemagne had borne the title 'King David'. This was not a mere poetic whimsy, as one used to believe, but a political proclamation. For the people of Byzantium called their ruler by the name of this biblical king when they wished to prove his legitimate descent from the ruler of the 'chosen people', the Jews, whose heirs were the *populus Christianus*. Not only did the people of Constantinople use the name of David in their *laudes*, but the Pope himself had adopted this usage at the opening of the sixth Synod of Constantinople. At the time of the political tension between Rome and Constantinople over the cult of images, the papacy had used

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this honorific for the Frankish ruler; it was changed when Hadrian I made the compromise with Irene. It was not the Pope who reverted to this title but the scholar Alcuin, who seems to have been the first to use it. Charlemagne's other friends soon followed his example.

It is clear then, that several years before the coronation of Charlemagne the intellectual climate was set for the event. All that was missing was the actual occasion which turned these claims and wishes into an event of political significance. It was not the victory over the Avars which gave rise to this occasion, even though it certainly heightened Charlemagne's self-confidence and brought Byzantium nearer. Nor was it the upheaval in Byzantium, when Irene thrust her son Constantine VI off the throne and appeared as sole 'Emperor of the Romans'. Not even a delegation of her enemies which repaired to Charlemagne's court in 798 and, according to a recently found source, offered him the crown seems to have obtained his consent. It was the disturbance in Rome, directed against the new Pope, Leo III, that was the immediate cause of the great event; this revolt, too, seems to have been somehow connected in its origin with the Greeks who lived in Rome and had been the friends of the deceased Pope Hadrian. Leo III could not, as did his predecessor, take the position of mediator between Aix-la-Chapelle and Byzantium. He had to place himself entirely at Charlemagne's disposition. Indeed, his enemies put him in prison, whence he escaped and appeared at Aix-la-Chapelle begging for help. Charlemagne had him conveyed back to Rome and took the opportunity, much more favourable than that in 794, to show the whole world his position as the protector of Christianity and of the Church. A synod met in Rome, and Leo was restored to his office and dignities. It is probable that even more important things than the papacy were discussed, and the Pope must have known of the desires of the Frankish court, which chimed with his own needs of permanent security for Rome and the papacy. And thus the famous events of Christmas 800 came to pass: when Charlemagne rose from prayer at St. Peter's, the Pope placed a crown on his head and the 'people of Rome' intoned the chorus, which had been for ages part of the rite whereby Roman emperors and their successors in Constantinople entered into their dignities.

Byzantium looked with scorn at the barbarian who had dared to invest himself with the imperial insignia. At the same time there was grave fear lest Charlemagne conquer Sicily and from that vantage point undermine the foundations of Irene's power. By dispatching a delegation, the Empress sought to anticipate such events, but these emissaries found the

situation much more favourable than could have been expected; there was no sign of military preparations, on the contrary, an offer of an alliance by marriage. Occidental sources had good reason to be silent on the subject of the proposals that Charlemagne submitted to Constantinople; it was a Byzantine chronicler who handed them down to us, and we have no reason to mistrust him. It was an extraordinary proposal, but it was to bring about a fundamental solution of the problems which had agitated all minds ever since 787: Irene should 'submit to masculine authority' by becoming the wife of Charlemagne. If Byzantium were to recognise Charlemagne as co-emperor, the conflict would be ended for good and all, the power of the West to be joined to the legal right of the East.

But the wheel of History could not be turned back and we are spared the trouble of guessing what would have been the result of the experiment which Charlemagne proposed. Irene was not loth to accept his wooing, and for that reason was deposed by her own court, with the Frankish delegates as witnesses. It was not until many years later that a compromise was effected with Byzantium, and that was quite different from the one dreamed of in Aix-la-Chapelle. Although Charlemagne's title of Emperor was recognised, he was not to be called Emperor of the Romans, a move which safeguarded the Byzantine claims, while it satisfied at the same time at least the greater part of the Frankish aspirations. Not all of them, however: for Charlemagne was not declared co-emperor; in Byzantine opinion he bore an empty title without political content.

In this way the fact was established that henceforth there were to be two empires, an *imperium occidentale*, and an *imperium orientale*; each believed itself to be the genuine and true empire of Christendom without, however, making an effort to draw the conclusions which followed from these views. The 'imperialist clerics' had believed in a universal empire of Christendom, and yet as the instruments of historical fate had had their share in shaping a unified Europe. It is true that it was a cultural rather than a political unity, which found expression only in the person of the Emperor. The times of the old Roman empire had not returned with the events of the year 800, and the kingdoms and counties continued to be the concrete political form governing the life of Charlemagne's subjects.

It was the dynasty rather than the imperial title, which constituted the link between these kingdoms in the succeeding decades. That was not even sufficient in the time of Charlemagne's grandson, Lothar I, to prevent the slow disintegration of the domains. A hundred years after Charlemagne's death this process was completed. It was good to remember the

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golden age of his reign, but no one dared in the midst of civil war and heathen invasions to aspire to the comprehensive plans of a past epoch. Yet the French no less than the Germans clung to the notion that they were Franks, their kings called themselves *rex Francorum* and were guided by Frankish law. It might be possible for one of these kings, the west-Frankish French, or the east-Frankish German, to succeed in placing a large portion of the Carolingian inheritance under his rule and extend his hegemony as well over Italy where the Roman tradition prevailed. Then would the hour be at hand for a renewal of the claim to the imperial title, though this new empire could not possibly be the same as that of Charlemagne.

In the tenth century France had at her disposal legitimate descendants of the Carolingians, but they were practically powerless. In Germany the kings ruled with a strong hand but they were descended from those Saxon nobles who had been Charlemagne's bitter enemies. Power and legitimacy were in different hands, as had happened before; and now again—just as under the Merovingians and under Charlemagne—power was legalised by the assumption of a title. Otto I was proclaimed emperor and defended his title against Byzantium in the same way as Charlemagne, in spite of the fact that this empire was erected on a much narrower foundation and corresponded much less to the ideal of universality than the earlier one. Even so the Saxon emperors ruled over central Europe, between independent France on one side and the Slavic peoples in the east, who were already beginning to play a role in the history of Europe.

Otto I tried to convert the Slavs by force and attempted to merge them with the German domains. Otto III, son of a Byzantine princess, replaced this very simple concept with new ideas, which were none other than the old Roman-Byzantine ones. He did not want to found a universal monarchy by means of war, but desired that the princes, including the Slavic ones, should freely yield to his rule. He harked back to the old traditions of Rome, and at a time when the will to a *renovatio* of the brilliance of the old capital grew ever stronger. But Otto III was no less mindful of Aix-la-Chapelle, and of Charlemagne, whose tomb he had opened to commune with the remains of the dead emperor.

Such ideas were not so remote from reality as one might think; in Poland and in Hungary at least they led to practical results. Both these states had declined to submit to the German kingdom and yet had emphasised that they considered themselves as part of Christendom. Both Mieszko of Poland and Stephen of Hungary acknowledged the Pope as

supreme lord, a prelude to what, in the time of Gregory VII, became a fact with even larger implications. Otto III tried to subordinate the papacy to his imperial will and was on the whole successful. If the Pope was merely a functionary of the Emperor, then the latter, also in Poland and Hungary, could appear as supreme ruler of these lands.

With the death of Otto III, this imperial concept broke down, and the East declared its independence. But neither Poland nor Hungary could assert this independence in the long run nor play a leading role in Christendom or the Empire. The rulers of these countries shipwrecked on the dissensions of their subjects and their own families, just as the great Slavonic kingdom of Swatopluk was wrecked when for a moment it had seemed to bid fair to compete with the declining Frankish state. Only one Slavic country could develop a lasting imperial tradition: Russia. Vladimir, the first Christian on the throne of Rurik, a contemporary of Otto III, was celebrated in his capital Kiev as the 'new Constantine of Rome the Great', he was 'like the Apostles' and was a 'holy Czar' after the model of the great Constantine. Such claims were directed against Byzantium, not against the Western Empire with whom the Russian state was at peace. When Constantinople fell, Moscow asserted itself as the 'third Rome'. Actually 'Holy Russia' became the heir of the Byzantine Empire and took over the belief that it had a special mission among the peoples.

The Slavs have never been able seriously to dispute the Empire with the Germans. This was not true of the French where the Carolingian tradition, particularly cherished at St. Denis, was never forgotten. The fact that Frederick Barbarossa had his bishops pronounce Charlemagne a saint was due to the political situation caused by the claims of the French kings who in several cases assumed the imperial title. But only after the fall of the Hohenstauffen was the time ripe to make these claims official. Charles of Anjou bore the name of the great Emperor and considered himself the heir of the Hohenstauffen empire in Italy. He himself felt no craving after the imperial title but desired that the imperial honours should be passed on to the family of the French kings. He tried to persuade Pope Gregory X to make his nephew Philipp III emperor: '*se il estoit empereur il porroit coeillir chevaliere de par tot de monde*'—the new emperor would enlist the knighthood of all of Europe in a crusade. The attempt was not successful, and several later attempts failed likewise; the empire remained, as before, bound up with the rule of the German kings.

It is true that at that moment the imperial idea represented a great tradition, not a real political power. For in the meantime the Church had

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tried to grasp this power for itself, and wished to carry out in fact what the papacy had established as theory centuries before. Gregory VII did not want to be a functionary of the empire but judge over the kings and their liege lord. He wanted himself to protect Christendom against the heathen and was planning to gather an army of crusaders, leading them in person. Yet Gregory, no more than Innocent III later on, succeeded in treading in the steps of the Emperor. The belief was too old that the Roman Empire must continue to survive until the Day of Judgment, and that its end would mean the coming of Anti-Christ. I have compared Christendom to an ellipse having two foci, the Emperor and the Pope. It did not change. Neither was finally the victor in the embittered struggle which profited only those who least participated in it: in the West, it was the kings; in Germany and Italy, the minor local powers who became the almost unchallenged lords of their territories. The political unity of Europe was lost and so remained down to later centuries. But the struggles between popes and emperors, just like the crusades, helped to further the contacts, both intellectual and cultural, between the inhabitants of the various kingdoms. Society, both feudal and urban, was organised according to similar principles throughout Europe. In politics too, the situation we now call 'the Concert of Europe', so characteristic of modern times, was being initiated. The states refused to obey the command of a single man, indeed they joined against anyone who wished to establish a hegemony over them.

The Empire fell and the nations became its heirs; but they formed an ensemble which would not have been possible without this Empire, its idea and its traditions—derived from the time of Charlemagne. Europe is held together by a common civilisation which it has passed on to the entire world. We are sure that this civilisation will endure and we hope that it will make of all the nations of the world one great family just as, in spite of everything to the contrary, Europe is one family. It is true that from the efforts of the 'imperialist clerics' at Charlemagne's court to the present time the road was long indeed and things turned out otherwise than they imagined. But their endeavours were not in vain, and Europe, indeed the whole world, has good reason to remember them with gratitude.

By LOUIS RENOU

INDIAN STUDIES IN 1952

Indian studies, as other branches of Orientalism, date back to the time when the first decipherings of texts, achieved in Europe, or at any rate by Europeans, made the treasures of Indian antiquity directly accessible to us.

There was of course what we might call a 'prehistoric period' of Indology, which might be placed in the eighteenth, indeed even in the seventeenth century: it is characterised by the efforts made by travellers and missionaries to acquire a certain knowledge of ancient India. The contact established about 1765 between a Tamil scholar, Maridas Pulle, and the French historian de Guignes might have advanced the date of the 'discovery' of Sanskrit by twenty years, as might the discoveries of Fathers Pon and Coeurdoux, who had a presentiment of the as yet unborn science of comparative grammar. But these pieces of work remained little known, and equal obscurity and tardy publication awaited the Latin translation of the *Upanishads* by Anquetil Duperron, itself made from a Persian version; the author, a hero of scholarly exploration, had taken the trouble of going to the spot to investigate the sources.

It was not, however, till the closing years of the eighteenth century that a succession of important translations, published immediately and brought to the notice of readers by the enthusiasm of German pre-Romantics such as Herder and the young Goethe, revealed to a wide public a civilisation of which it had known nothing.

The start of the movement coincides with the foundation at Calcutta in 1784 of the world's senior Asiatic society. There followed in quick succession the publication, by English scholars in contact with Indian men of letters, of the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* in 1785, the *Hita-Upadeśa* in 1787, *Sakuntala* in 1789, the *Rîtu-samhâra* in 1792, and the *Laws of Manu* in 1794.

The first chair of Sanskrit was established in 1814 at the Collège de France; the foundation of the Société Asiatique in Paris dates to 1822, anticipating by some years that of the London Society. In Germany, the first university chair devoted to India was that of Bonn, created in 1818 for August Wilhelm von Schlegel. Since then the impetus has continued, without slackening, down to our own days. All the big universities (except those of the Iberian countries) and many of the lesser ones now offer courses in Indian studies. In India itself, where learning had been kept barely alive in the pandit colleges and in the shadow of the temples, emulation has given rise, since 1870, to an ever-growing volume of erudite work. Today it is India itself, with its hundred learned publications, its innumerable specialised institutes, its museums, its universities where whole departments are devoted to Indian studies, which makes by far the most voluminous contribution in this field.

The reorganisation on modern lines of the Indian archæological services only goes back to the closing years of last century, under Lord Curzon. The extent of the tasks which confronted the archæologists forced them to devote their attention first to the preservation or restoration of existing monuments rather than to digging for new treasures. It is thanks to this work that it is possible to see today, in their original splendour, so many of the temples, palaces, and fortresses, spared by the Moslem tidal wave. But this did not mean that digging was neglected: the old Srâvasti, of the halcyon days of Buddhism, the old 'university' town of Taxila, the monastery of Nâhandâ, near which a Buddhist institute has just been built, bear witness to the extent and quality of the archæological finds.

Indology has opened its doors wide to the methods of scholarship which have already displayed their value in other fields of philology and history. It is true that there was a time when scholars idealised Vedantic and Buddhistic origins, when they attributed a fabulous antiquity (as Indians

often still do) to the literary monuments of India and sought in them for the traces of primitive humanity. The romantic haze of those early times took a long time to disperse; but those times are gone now, never to return.

India must not be treated differently from Greece or Rome. The fact that it was late in being submitted to the scalpel of scholarship enabled it to profit from experience gained elsewhere. It is true that dilettantism is still rampant, aggravated by the influence of visionaries, by the 'horrible literature' (as Mircea Eliade so rightly calls it) of the neo-Buddhists, the 'traditionalists', and the occultists of one kidney or another. This phenomenon is particularly virulent round the skirts of India, which has always been a happy hunting ground for charlatans. But since the great Burnouf it can safely be said that these fantasies have no more chance of distorting reality than would the outpourings of dilettantes who had chosen integral calculus or nuclear physics as their hobby.

Indology stands out from the other Orientalist disciplines which came to birth at the same period, such as Egyptology and Assyriology, in that it has certain characteristics peculiar to itself. To begin with, in contrast with other related disciplines, it deals with a *living* subject-matter. An uninterrupted tradition of language and thought, probably the longest which history records, links archaic India with the India of today. Many present-day Hindus (to mention only Gandhi) reason in the terms of mediæval scholasticism; others have their connexions with the 'rishis', those seer-poets whose voices were heard when the sacred books were taking form. This fact gives, or should give, Indology its own line of approach. The study of ancient sources had indeed always been capital and must quite legitimately and necessarily remain so. Indology has grown accustomed to think in terms of origins. It has understood that the important thing was to pin down the starting-point of ideas, terms, and styles, from which historical evolution has followed in what may be called a natural and predictable course. Perhaps this attitude has led to an exaggerated lack of interest in later periods, but this disadvantage is less and less felt today, and it will be agreed that the first imperative in the heroic ages of research (which are not yet completely closed) was to lay a solid foundation for the discipline and to dissipate the fringe of darkness that hung about its frontiers.

It is nonetheless true that a knowledge of the living India, an association with its *câstris* and its pandits, gives research a resonance it could never attain in the study of dead civilisations. The difficult texts of the Indian

Middle Ages would never have been understood without the help of written commentaries; but these commentaries themselves were illuminated by the orally communicated scholarship of specialists who have handed down to our own days, from father to son, from master to pupil, as did the alchemists in other ages, lessons of irreplaceable value.

Indology in the West has not taken all the advantage it should of these bearers of tradition. In the nineteenth century, apart from the little groups of 'Anglo-Indians' or 'Germano-Indians', who worked in the country near some great collection of manuscripts, Indology developed as a science divorced from reality. That is the reason why syntheses, conjectural explanations, and criticism took the lead over the direct search for written or monumental sources, over the publication and translation of works. Many important texts, particularly those subsequent to the tenth century (the crucial period, when India entered on the path of learned commentaries) remain to this day unpublished or at least untranslated. The Indologist does not have the degree of intimacy with his authors that any good Hellenist has with the thought of Plato or the art of Homer. It is true, however, that he finds himself at grips with literatures unlimited in their extent and often obscure in their meaning—sometimes growingly obscure as they approach the modern age.

Indigenous scholarship has assumed yet other aspects. Alongside the specialists of *çâstra* or of the technical disciplines there exist, particularly in the field of the oldest religious forms, i.e., in the Vedic domain, men who, without bothering about the meaning of which they are sometimes actually unaware, retain in their memory texts of a formidable length. They are capable of reciting them without a fault, using all the artifices of a hieratic pronunciation and the acrobatics of a systematised mnemotechny. In our civilisations, dominated by the written word and the ready-made text-book, it is difficult to imagine the part played by a memory developed to this degree. If we knew how to use these undaunted reciters of the *Veda* (their counterparts are to be found also in Ceylon for the Buddhist literature in Pali) we should observe the persistence of certain variants, of certain phonic or accentual traditions which no manuscript could ever perpetuate. The final form and arrangement of the great religious and epic works had been determined without the help of writing. Writing was not only known in the India of the third century B.C., but the regional variations evidenced in Emperor Açoka's famous engraved inscriptions point to the assumption that it had been known for a long time. It was, however, only used for profane purposes. It is possible that

religious documents were entrusted to writing from the moment of their oral 'editing', but the authoritative version was certainly the oral one. The Buddhist and Jain canons were also transmitted orally, as their repetitions and enumerative lists show; the first is believed not to have been entrusted to the scribes till the first century B.C., and the second till later still. These documents, which deal with the life of monks in the smallest detail, never make a reference to a manuscript or a pen. When there was some danger of a text getting lost, recourse was had to the neighbouring community to restore the missing portions. The educated man is 'he who has heard much', and in every Buddhist sermon, what is called the *sūtra*, or the ideal thread on which the sacred recitations are strung, begins with the formula: 'Thus I have heard.' Right down to our days the contempt, or at least the lack of sympathy, felt by Indians for the written word has shown itself in many ways.

All this has not been without its importance. Oral transmission calls for certain forms of fidelity with which a written text can dispense. It finally imposes on thought itself a frame and norms quite distinct from those called for by book-learning.

Indian thought is in any case formalist to a high degree. The cult of grammar provides a striking proof of this. To be faithful to India is to think first of all as a grammarian, it has been justly observed. The grammatical *canons*—for a sacrosanct text is involved—are authoritative, not only on what they teach but on the form in which they teach it. The position and choice of a word in a grammatical proposition, the absence of this or that expected element (absence and silence have a normative value in India) are almost as much a part of the lesson as the content of the rule. Similarly in poetry, the choice of words, their position and their rhythm, the norms which they obey, are much more important than the content of the works, which tirelessly repeats the same conventional narrative themes. The anxiety to suggest rather than to formulate contributed, by the way, to the deliberate abandonment of the rich flexional system once possessed by Sanskrit, which more and more tended to agglutinative formations, by the impact of elements of compound words which had linked up.

At the end of Indian antiquity, when the great profane disciplines were taking shape—the various sciences, grammar and poetry, philosophy, law and medicine—oral teaching had resulted in the constitution of enormous commentaries, at first textual, then with more leeway, which were founded on some anonymous text elevated to the rank of a 'basic text'.

It was thus that Sanskrit literature became largely a literature of commentaries, the more so as the original layers, the only ones which had embodied any creative effort, had gradually disappeared. The systems of philosophy which are called 'ways of seeing', that is, of envisaging the same reality in different perspectives, arose as the continuation of commentaries piled one upon another and starting from a more or less obscure source which, by its very obscurity, lent itself to divergent interpretations. Occultism is here, if occultism it be—in fact we are faced with mere condensation for pedagogical and mnemotechnic ends—in *statu nascendi*. All the dialectical and sophistical development which follows is devoted to its elucidation; for there is nothing deliberately esoteric in India, not even the *Tantras*. The Buddha gloried in having kept nothing hidden 'in his closed fist', and the 'fist of the master' (*âcârayamishṭi*), jealously hoarding truths which he should communicate to his pupil, is the symbol of a state of mind to be stigmatised. The *Upanishad*, which Anquetil called *secretum tegendum*, reached Rome in the third century (St. Hippolytus) and the East Indian archipelago probably about the same time; what was believed to mean 'secret' or 'occult teaching' was nothing but the practice, open to anyone, of the game of symbolical correlations between the terrestrial and the supra-terrestrial spheres. 'This world imitates the other world, the other world imitates this world.' This phrase from the *Altareya-Brâhmana* is a fair summary of the general tendency of speculations in ancient India.

It is not generally appreciated to what point the practice of the commentary, which itself reflects the direct relations of master and pupil (or, transposed to the divine plane, of Çiva and the Goddess) has moulded the Indian mind. Many such works are really dialogues, whose meaning is illuminated when the missing speakers—master, advanced student, possessor of a partial truth, apprentice—are restored. Progress is measured by objections and answers. The reader himself is a pupil who must be given access to the truth by 'awakening' him to it: the aim is to attain, behind every relative *truth*, the inexpressible truth, the *dhvani* or 'resonance' of the writers on poetics, in such a manner that the reader shall realise it in the sense of identifying himself with it rather than of grasping it rationally. Hence the repetitions which encumber Indian phraseology, the absence of composition in our sense of the word, the tendency to classifications and identifications, the inflation of old texts with new material, with no attempt to harmonise the two.

True knowledge, in the rational as well as in the mystical order, is that

which is learned at the feet of the master; for, says the Chândogya, 'I have learned from those like you that the knowledge which leads the straightest is that which is received from the master.'

Indian studies as they have developed in the course of 150 years of exertions are a group of disciplines which are distinct though naturally linked by much internal overlapping. These disciplines embrace almost all that classical antiquity has to offer, in addition to some other branches of learning which have no parallel in the West. Thus Yoga, in its authentic meaning, not in the travesties which usurp its name today, is a precise technique (inevitably capped with a piece of philosophical speculation) for attaining mastery of the mystic. Mīmāṃsā, again, is a sort of hermeneutics of the ancient liturgy on the basis of a reinterpretation of it on juridical lines. A bird's-eye view of the various disciplines gives a fascinating impression of unity. Though the methods of study enjoined are the most diverse, the practices and recipes recommended of an infinite variety, the aim of these learned 'actions', whether they be concerned with poetry or legislation, asceticism or pleasure, is always the same: the search for symbolic filiations, the pursuit, in short, of a kind of magic. The more or less explicit goal is to attain Deliverance, the key word which dictates every Indian activity. Failing the attainment of this end, the accumulation of merit which will shorten the road to it is also a desirable objective. As late as the eighteenth century Nāgoji, the great grammarian, was explaining that religious merit may be acquired by employing words with grammatical correctness and, even more subtly, that phonemes which might appear redundant in the statement of a rule are designed to permit the student who concentrates his mind on them to progress on the path of Deliverance. In poetics, the perception of the *rasa* or 'savour' aroused in the reader by a work of art, has the effect of destroying the 'envelopes' which enclosed a mind impregnated with virtualities and prevented it from enjoyment: the being is liberated from its chains, like the apprentice mystic arrived at the terminal rapture of Yoga. In the field of law, the essential injunctions are those whose infraction or observance sets off an 'unheard of effect', this being the point of impact towards which the human act fatally tends at the end of its trajectory: a metaphysical fiction designed to explain the persistence of *karman* between the moment of an act and that when its effect is detonated.

It goes without saying that few of the Indian logical articulations correspond with ours. The arrangement and the form both differ. Thought moves in a circle, tracing a sort of virtual 'mandala', zigzagging through

the formulable zones before taking off for the 'fourth step', the hidden step, the step which in the distant past was called the 'that', or the 'so', or the 'who?', when it was not desired to give it its real name, brahman, 'spiritual energy condensed in a pregnant formula', or (in the mythified zone of the vocabulary) the god Prajâpati.

Amidst this group of disciplines, historical research is laggard. Ancient India had neither chronicles nor annals, and it has often been said that Indians have no head for history. It is a fact that none of their exceedingly prolix poems has preserved the memory of the great tribal movements which at the dawn of the historic period shaped the definitive ethnical structure of the peninsula.

Yet India always thought it was recording its history. The *Purânas*, those huge repositories of 'antiquities', were conceived as treatises on universal history: they start with the cosmogony to end with the dynasties of the future. In other words, the periods of real history form only an episode in the cosmic cycle, and even they are generally transformed into mystical or legendary themes. Already the Hymns of the *Veda* conveyed mere scraps of history engulfed by mythological phraseology. The anecdotes explaining the origin of the monastic rules among the Buddhists have sloughed off so many skins of fiction as have those which, in the *Brâhmanas*, set out to account for the ancient liturgy. The narratives on the Councils have been systematically distorted and travestied. But the great Epic has now firmly established its character as a record of historical fact. Indian scholars are still lavishing their energies on the effort to fix the exact date when the great war which the *Mâhabârata* describes began and to identify the route of the military expedition which the *Râmâyana* recounts. The teophany of the *Gîtâ* is placed in a historical setting. Krishna was the head of a clan before becoming a universal deity. But, with his innate tendency towards subversion, the Indian instantly transposes one into the other, as Blake did when he recognised in the French Revolution the reflection of the struggles between cosmic demons. Kalhana, the author of the only chronicle which comes near satisfying our historical canons, writes in verse, as did his compeers. 'Who except a poet', he asks, 'could bring the past of men back to life?'

But the poet was subject to strict conventions, to those rules which fettered Indian learning in its every manifestation. His hero must have the virtues of an epic character, he must himself be faithful to the exigencies of the panegyric which at the dawn of time set the key for the duties of the kavi, the 'poet-champion' of religious tournaments. History was thus

an occasional work, born fortuitously and dying with the death of the dynast.

The inscriptions, engraved on metal or stone, have in part filled this gap. The work carried out in epigraphy in the last century, though it may not have been so thorough as that accomplished in the field of Greek or Latin, has nonetheless resurrected, fragment by fragment, whole centuries of lost history. It was the Sanskrit inscriptions of Cambodia, of the ancient kingdom of Champâ, which led to the discovery of a fact barely suspected eighty years ago: the profound Hinduisation of South-East Asia, the peaceful penetration into these distant lands, over a period of twelve centuries, of the Buddhism of the 'Lesser Vehicle' and of the central ideas of Brahmanism, its regalain doctrine, its legislation, and its social framework.

Starting as a special discipline, Indology has thus tended to become the link between widely diverse studies: it is, with Islam, the necessary basis for any serious understanding of Asia, from Afghanistan to the Pacific. The India which had been regarded as turned in on itself had in fact been animated by a great expansive force, and the expansion was the more admirable in that it was accomplished without conquest or violence. Buddhism (to a certain extent also Brahmanism) was the vehicle of a universal culture, just as Christianity was in the West.

Indology is sometimes thought of as a more or less settled and static science. It is true that the discoveries made in its field have not been as spectacular as those in Egypt or Palestine, for example. Really early documents have either been lacking or undecipherable (as at Mohenjo-Daro); then suddenly there has come an overwhelming flood of texts, like those figurines that pit the stone of the temples in the south. We are at the opposite pole from Persia, where a few fragmentary texts wrested from the earth have compelled the rethinking of an entire problem. The accumulation of already known and identified monuments and documents is such that any new find takes its place in the whole without introducing any significant change. There has been no repetition of the luck of 1909, when there were discovered in quick succession an important text dealing with economics and politics and a series of comedies which probably represented a pre-Kalidasian school of drama. The Gilgit manuscripts disappointed more than one hope, and the progressive discovery of more *Tantras* confirms rather than changes the spiritual conditions which had long been suspected. Any chance of getting new texts on the remoter periods, which would be far more important, seems now to be ruled out.

If, however, discovery seems to be at a standstill in some of the fields covered by Indian studies, it is because there are not enough workers. Active Indology has always been the work of a handful of men with small means. In France, Burnouf for twenty years shouldered the responsibility almost alone, then for a time there was the triumvirate of Roth, Böhrlingk, Weber in Germany and that of Sylvain Lévi, Finot, Foucher in France. It is a poor science, whose utility is even today unappreciated by those whose duty it is to draw up its programmes and lay down its curricula. In this respect, we have gone a long way back from the romantic days when Ballanche demanded that Latin should be replaced in elementary education by Oriental languages, and particularly by Sanskrit. Indologists would be content with a lot less now. All they wish is that it should no longer be possible to write general histories of philosophy without mentioning the Indian philosophers, or text-books on alchemy or astrology (like the two otherwise excellent volumes which recently appeared in the French 'Que Sais-je?' series) that passed over the important Indian contribution to these subjects, to which Berthelot and Biot paid deserved tribute in the past.

How many specialists are there in the world on Indian law or poetics? Yet these subjects have been the source of an uninterrupted flow of didactic treatises for fifteen or twenty centuries. The tools at the disposal of the Indologist, text-books and reference books, become obsolete faster than in other fields. Yet they are replaced more slowly. The French student of Sanskrit has to rely on a dictionary whose first volume was compiled more than a century ago, and conditions are even worse for other Indian languages and literatures.

Yet points of view change from generation to generation; sometimes, it is true, by the mere resurrection of old theses which had fallen into unmerited discredit. Chronological and archæological hypotheses succeed each other rapidly. There is perhaps no field in which so many have been constructed as on the subject of India. That is perhaps the inevitable price to be paid by a discipline dealing with elusive and ill-defined literary and symbolic traditions, which lend themselves to a number of equally plausible interpretations. In archæology, the symbolic view has resumed its precedence over positive research. We are back at the position of Creuzer, as in mythology we are at that of Adalbert Kuhn and Max Müller. In Buddhist studies, chopping and changing from one dogma to another has been continuous. And meanwhile a really modern linguistic description of India still remains to be made, and a country eminently

religious has not inspired a single history of religions worthy of the name.

Work was for a long time concentrated on Vedism, a privileged field in that it permitted a link to be established between the Indo-European and the strictly Indian traditions: the 'Sanskrit and Comparative Grammar' schools of the older universities stem from this preference. In former days, the way for an Indologist to win his spurs was to edit some Vedic treatise. This type of study has been slowly losing ground in the last quarter century, though it has quite recently experienced a certain revival. In the meantime attention had been turned to Buddhism, first in the Pali traditions, then in those of Northern Buddhism. The latter had been opened up to scholars since the dawn of research by the genius of Burnouf. Under the inspiration of Sylvain Lévi, Buddhology has adopted the comparative method (Sanskrit-Tibetan-Chinese) which seems today to be the definitively established approach.

As a result the centre of gravity of Indology has tended to shift from India proper. Scientific access to India from the outside has, indeed, always been an easy matter; the manuscripts which pagodas and cloisters had been powerless to preserve in the tropics have been revealed to us in the sands of Central Asia. More than one problem has been successfully tackled by thus by-passing India. The network of connexions established with the Indian periphery, from the expedition of Alexander (and even at a yet earlier date) to the Moslem conquest, has always been closer and more ramified. It is no longer possible today to believe in an 'Indian miracle', any more than it is in what was formerly called the 'Greek miracle', or to see in India, as men did a hundred years ago, 'the school-mistress of the human race'. Archæology bears witness to the presence of a Greek influence which, probably by way of Persia, helped to form the Gandhara style. The Roman remains recently found at Pondicherry explain certain Greco-Latin characteristics of the art of Amarâvati. Later, very probably, came an Alexandrian influence on astronomy and astrology, and much later a probably Persian influence on mysticism. But all this happened at a period when autonomous Indian thought had already yielded the fruit it had to give. Kaye, to prove the Indian indebtedness to Greece, did not hesitate to invent the contents of lost Greek works: so tenacious was the prejudice according to which India *could* not have discovered anything.

To be realistic we must take into account, if not the chimera of a 'primitive tradition', at least the plausibility of convergences and

coincidences, as in the case of Buddhist quietism in China, which so closely resembles that which our seventeenth century elaborated in the teachings of the Fathers of the Church. After all, the number of speculative solutions at the disposal of mankind is limited. It is hardly sensible to search in Persia or some questionable Anatolia for the origin of this or that Indian conception, as has been attempted even recently. It is idle to maintain today that the basis of Indian religion and thought are 'anârian', a convenient hat-rack on which to hang our ignorance. If we exert ourselves to explain things from the inside, we soon see that there is a logic and a predictability about the evolution of Indian facts. Influence and borrowing, after all, have little meaning when what is in question is doctrinal themes which have undergone a process of profound rethinking. We must not 'historicise' to the excess when dealing with India, where very often thinking is not individual but peculiar to a group or school, therefore impersonal and, by its very nature, outside time.

In any case, India has given more than it has received. If the analogies between Greek and Indian medicine, between Plotinism and *Vedânta*, Pyrrhonism and *Mâdhyamika* demand (which is not proved) a genetic solution, one should suppose that the first impulse came from India. The same could be said about the similarities between Taoism and Yoga.

However important these researches are, they should not make us forget the heart of the matter, which is the direct and profound understanding of the great texts. Shortly after Athens and Rome, long before our modern civilisation, India had created a classicism. If the word classic has any sense, where can it be better applied than in India which, during a certain period, experienced from every side such an influx of norms, canons, and models that all subsequent activity consisted in reproducing or in extolling them? 'Law' and 'being' have come to be expressed by the same word. In most of the learned or artistic techniques an attempt has been made to think in terms of rules, of 'given standards'. Even today a mystic like Aurobindo, who turns his back (without being aware of it) on tradition, is striving to rethink the *Gîtâ* and the *Upanishads*, indeed, even the *Veda*, under the headings laid down by the old masters.

People think that they can talk of Indian values just because they have read a few translations. These are no more than crutches for the real interpretation, which cannot be reached except by strictly adhering to an original text, learned literally, I should be inclined to say even, grammatically. Many an amateur who does not even know whether Nâgari was written from left to right or reversely, believes he has discovered

the deeper meaning of the myths and discourses on the *Advaita*. Guénon, whose knowledge of the ancient sources was limited to the little he had learned from a Hindu student temporarily in Paris, claimed to lay down the law on Indology. In reality, no translation, not even the best, is good enough. Each phrase is a function of the context. Everything hangs together in these speculations in which it would be vain to interpret a single detail without having access to the whole. We do not know even today the precise sense of some of the most important terms of ancient thought, some of which are decisive for the articulations of Indian reasoning. How is it possible under these conditions to make a valid generalisation?

We are no longer back in the time of Lamartine or Michelet, to whom lyrical passages excerpted from a miserable version of the *Rāmāyana* sufficed to reveal the unfathomable beauty of Indian speculations. We are living in a period of difficult research work, of specialisations painfully acquired. The often considerable differences of view which characterise the work of scholarship and draw the scorn of the ignorant, mark, in the long run, a line of progress whose setbacks have been only temporary: most of the positions which were fashionable in the last century have now been definitively abandoned.

It would be an error to believe that ancient India was entirely devoted to metaphysics, or that every Indian would share the outlook of the modern *Veda* scholar who said, as quoted by O. Lacombe, 'We do not explain the world, we explain it away.' Even in the philosophical field there have been thinkers attached to a rigorous reality, such as Abhinavagupta, who built up a system of poetics on a psychological basis; or Çāncara himself, who was above everything an exegetist, I should almost say, a philologist. The basis of the teaching delivered by the mathematicians, musicians, and doctors was no less precise and positive than that of the Greeks or the scholars of the western Middle Ages; at certain points it may have penetrated deeper. Like Greece, India diffused that spirit of scientific positivism whose laws were later to be formulated by Descartes. It devoted itself, if in an often disconcerting fashion, to defining principles and justifying axioms.

Harmonious co-existence between direct observation and systematisation can be seen in the juridical domain. Caste, for instance, is distinguished and described, and long lists of castes are furnished which coincide with the facts of today. But the reality has been masked by an apparatus of classification. From an unequal marriage, children of a certain inferior

caste will be born. But just which caste it will be depends on a whole series of conditions: the social distance between the parents; whether the marriage was normal (the man of superior rank to the woman) or abnormal (the reverse); finally, whether the union was legitimate or not. And the members of these new castes, if they in their turn make mixed marriages, give birth to yet more intercrossings and yet further castes. Be that as it may, the juridical structure of ancient and mediæval India is the only one which, at least in its fulness, bears comparison with that of Rome.

As far as economics is concerned, classical antiquity offers nothing even comparable to the treatise of Kautilya, the materials of which may date to the third century B.C. The descriptions of the fixing and collection of taxes, the organisation of monopolies and governmental undertakings, the distribution of private and public enterprises, the classified lists of sources of royal revenue, with the rate at which each paid, come near the ideas of the eighteenth-century economists.

Ambiguity, simultaneous plurivalence, are of the domain of the myth, of religious or artistic symbolism. Elsewhere the Hindu can be as rational as anyone else, an acute observer (except when theory blinds him to reality), even, should occasion arise, a cynic. So considerable have been the achievements of Indian grammar that a contemporary linguist, Leonard Bloomfield, could say that the work of Pāṇini represents 'one of the greatest monuments of human intelligence'.

What the western Indologist needs to do is to renounce his Aristotelian forms of thought, which have become so natural to him that he finds it difficult to believe they are not valid for everybody. He must resolutely unlearn a part of what European humanism has bequeathed to him—the heritage of the Mediterranean world which he vaingloriously translated into universal terms.

By CLAUDE LÉVI-STRAUSS

PANORAMA OF ETHNOLOGY 1950-1952

A panorama of ethnological studies during the last two or three years must cover considerations as apparently remote as the margin of error in estimating the age of radio-active elements on the one hand and, on the other, the question of whether ethnology originates from the sciences of Man or the sciences of Nature. This widening of the scope of ethnological studies is matched by the widening of public interest in ethnological problems, or, to put it more precisely, in problems presented in the terms and by the aid of ethnological formulae. It should be noted, moreover, that also the traditional domain of ethnology is in a process of expansion, stretching from the study of the so-called savage or primitive social forms, without hesitating any longer, to the field of modern society and its most complex activities.

Thirty years ago Kroeber opened this route by tackling the problem of the feminine fashion from the ethnological point of view. Today ethnology travels in many directions. It studies manners and penetrates into the phenomena of the film industry. Not even the antagonism between East and West is out of its reach.

In fact, by a demand as pressing in its requirements as it is vague in its aims, ethnology appears to be on the road to the formulation of a new humanism. Perhaps, the rediscovery of ancient culture during the Renaissance—with the collaboration of the Arabs—was itself already an ethnological enterprise, though conceived on a limited basis.

While the modern movement is more ambitious in its scope, it is not essentially different in its methods. Ethnology always concerns itself with the understanding of man through a comparative study of a vast number of human experiences.

The search for such experiences, however, is no longer confined to the fields of exploit of exceptional spirits—poets, orators, or philosophers—but takes in the humble labours of those anonymous groupings called societies. It has become ever clearer that there can be no reliance upon the experiences of an 'elite' (chosen, in any case, by some subjective criterion) and that no conclusion has any validity even with regard to a selected few unless it be inspired by the experience of all. Never has an ambition so high been so consciously formulated by a single discipline. For ethnology is nothing less than an effort to explain the complete man by means of studying the whole social experience of man.

Faced with such a task, the ethnologist might have felt discouraged. But while measuring the size of his endeavour he became aware of the possibility of greatly simplifying his method. Thus the essential could be seized from the great mass of evidence.

Research projects as different from one another as the elaboration of the Human Relation Files of Yale University, the studies looking toward a firmer grounding for the notions of 'basic personality' or 'national character', the structural analyses, all have a definite relationship. For although they use different means and sometimes even are guided by incompatible theories, they share the same preoccupation: their aim is to isolate, from the mass of customs, creeds, and institutions, a precipitate which often is infinitesimal but contains in itself the very meaning of man.

Aware of its special mission, ethnology retains the hybrid character owed to its historical origin. It has taken pell-mell to its breast many observations which none of the traditional sciences were disposed to welcome. This reluctance may have been due to the oddity of customs or to the low level of existence among the populations in question, which placed them outside the available systems of reference. In other cases that reluctance may have been based on a more banal reason, viz., the absence of graven images upon monuments or of writing, which disarmed the

enterprises of the archaeologist and the historian. Finally—as is the case in pre-Columbian America—it takes Rosetta stones to produce Champollions.

Rag-picker of the humanities from the beginning, anthropology believes that it has now found the master keys to the human mystery among the debris round the doors of the other disciplines. Even while preparing to try them, slowly and prudently, in the locks, it pursues its humble duty of straightening and sorting the residue which continues to accumulate.

If the historians and the archaeologists have abandoned immense periods of history to the anthropological sciences, it is because the dates are so very uncertain. In the case of the Lower Paleolithic period, for instance, there are margins of error amounting to as much as 300,000 years. Anthropology has shown its ingenuity in applying itself to quite different disciplines and borrowing from them the means of reducing such uncertainties.

Thus, pollen analysis or palynology as it is called today, and the study of tree rings, or dendrochronology, appeal simultaneously to geology, botany, meteorology, astronomy, and archaeology. Yet, whatever the progress achieved through such methods, they remain subject to contradictory limitations. Palynology goes back to ancient times but it gives only relative dates. In other words, it is a system suitable only for the establishment of correlations within archaeological phases which are themselves uncertain. Inversely, dendrochronology gives absolute dates but can hardly take the investigator back more than 2,000 years.

The discovery by W. F. Libby of a method of dating archaeological remains of animal or vegetable origin by the measurement of radio-activity in Carbon 14 thus has upset not only the anthropological perspectives but probably, even in the very short run, the bases themselves of the division of work among the various sciences of man.¹

The method is based on the hypothesis that radio-active carbon forms spontaneously in the highest atmospheric layers through the effect of cosmic rays and the rate of formation remains constant throughout history. The proportion of radio-active carbon in inert carbon is likewise assumed to remain constant everywhere.

When human intervention transforms organic matter (wood, fibre, bone, etc.) into a manufactured object or into debris, this matter ceases to maintain its radio-active equilibrium with the environment. If the residual

¹cf. *Radiocarbon Dating*. Assembled by F. Johnston. *American Antiquity*, XVII, 1, 2, 1951.

radio-activity is measured, it will be seen when the matter was handled by man.

A discussion of the technical problems of an extremely delicate nature which had to be resolved cannot be undertaken here. It may suffice to enumerate the most important results, although their validity, for the time being, is to be taken as provisional.

Initial tests on objects dated by other means have been remarkably exact. Apart from a doubtful date on the tomb of Zoser (which cannot be so recent), all the Egyptian time periods indicated by the radio-carbon method coincide approximately with the long-established chronologies. It has been all but impossible, till now, to work on the neolithic and proto-historic civilisations of the Orient on account of the reluctance of museum curators to permit the destruction of rare objects (or parts thereof) in their keeping. For the new system requires carbonisation of specimens beforehand. The few measures which could be taken tend toward the same conclusion: that the Neolithic revolution, with the birth of agriculture and the domestication of animals, was followed much more rapidly than had been supposed by the rise of the Great States. The intervening period could hardly have been more than two thousand years as against the three or four thousand years which had been assumed till now. In Egypt, e.g., the Fayoum A had been ascribed an absolute age of 6,095 years, plus or minus 250 years. Now the date may be set as not more than a thousand years before the founding of the First Dynasty (3100 B.C.).

A similar condensation of chronology seems to result from the only measurement published so far on the Western prehistoric period, viz., that of the charcoal found in the Cave of Lascaux, which would belong in the thirteenth millennium B.C. (It is difficult to say, however, whether the fireplaces from which they were extracted are of the same period as the frescoes.)

In the field of American history and archaeology the new method has yielded the richest results. The reason is twofold. First of all, the fact that the method was elaborated in the United States, at the Institute of Nuclear Studies of the University of Chicago, has attracted local resources and the curiosity of American scholars. Second, estimations of American archaeological material had been conjectural and it had become particularly pressing to give this vast domain a beginning of stability.

Generally, the results of this research suggest conclusions symmetrical with, but opposite to, those obtained in the Old World. In other words, the American dates are between 500 and 1,500 years older than had been

supposed. The very archaic levels without ceramics, and with an agriculture without corn, recently discovered in Peru in the valley of Viru and at Huaca Prieta, might be about 4,000 years old. Remains in the United States, on the other hand, such as Bat Cave, where primitive forms of corn and archaic cochiise have been found, may go back as far as 6,000 years. Tlatilco, in Mexico, may have an age of 6,390 years, plus or minus 300.

The dawn of the historical cultures of South America may be dated as follows: Mochica, from the fourth century B.C. to the second century A.D.; Paracas, third or fourth century B.C.; and Nazca, first or second century B.C. Principal estimates for Mexico are: Tehotihuacan and the first Monte Alban, between the start of the first millennium and the fifth century B.C.; Monte Alban II, first to second century B.C.; Tehotihuacan III and Monte Alban III, about the fourth century A.D.

Still greater surprises were in store for the archæologists of the United States when, all at once, the dates of the important prehistoric cultures of Adena and Hopewell had to be reversed in their relative position, moved up in their absolute position, and spread over a longer period of evolution than had been supposed.

Since, however, these conclusions often contradict other estimates, they are not accepted universally. At any rate, these observations indicate that the start of civilisation in America and, in particular, the diffusion of cultivated species go back at least a thousand years farther than had been supposed. As the Neolithic period of the Old World has been given new youth at the same time that the New World has been endowed with additional antiquity, relationships between the two may have to be regarded in a new light.

Whatever the importance of the results and of the perfections which are rightfully expected, two limitations of the radio-carbon method cannot be ignored. As the period, or half-life, of the isotope is 5,600 years, measurements by the methods at our disposal today can go back only about 25,000 years. Until other substances reaching farther into the past are found, such prehistoric epochs as the Middle and Lower Palæolithic must remain out of bounds.

Secondly, the method is based on the measurement of a statistical phenomenon, viz., the rhythm of disintegration of radio-active atoms. The duration of the measurement period is now 48 hours. Augmenting this period would result in an ever closer approximation to the exact values, but it would mean fewer reports from the limited number of present-day laboratories. And the result will be, in any case, a probability

(although increasingly high) for a date placed between two limits (which will approach each other ever closer as the method is perfected).

In 1949 H. de Terra published his final conclusions in regard to the Man of Tepexcan,² which the carbon method indirectly (by measurements of the nearby radio-active turf) dates back some twelve thousand years. While certain persons hesitate to accept this estimate, it has just received a sensational confirmation from the as yet unpublished discovery of a mammoth skeleton in the same region of central Mexico. Among the bones were found six worked stone tools, which apparently had been abandoned by men in the process of skinning the beast; for certain parts of it had already been stripped.

Recent discoveries in regard to the chronology of Mexican civilisations were announced by Paul Kirchhoff at the 27th International Congress of Americanists in New York in 1947. The first volume of the Proceedings had just been published by the University of Chicago Press under the title *The Civilizations of Ancient America*. According to Kirchhoff, the older authors had concocted a synthetic chronology by piecing together local chronologies. It would be sufficient to disentangle this confusion in order to recover the distinct chronologies. These correspond with a precision permitting the announcement of the pre-Columbian societies' arrival as a part of history proper. By this method the dates of the foundation of Tenochtitlan and Tlatelolco would be set as 1369-1370.

Another important contribution in the same direction has been made by Eric Thompson. In his recent work³ he undertakes a critical revision of all existing documents dealing with the deciphering of Maya writing. He brings many new insights into the metaphysical and cosmological ideas of the ancient Maya and elucidates the meaning of many hieroglyphs, thus encouraging the hope that the Mexican writings can finally be made legible fairly soon.

In fact, all our conceptions about the proto-history of Mexico (and, indirectly, that of all America) show the advance signs of a complete change. For a century the Maya were believed to be the founders of the advanced civilisations of Central America. It becomes clear now that they were, along with the Zapotecs, nothing more than the bearers, however flamboyant, of a culture still little known and arbitrarily called Olmec, which flourished, in the very heart of Mexico, from the archaic period to

²New York: Viking Fund, 1949.

³*Maya Hieroglyphic Writing: Introduction*. Publ. No. 589. Washington: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1950.

the beginning of the Christian era and had developed a style unsurpassed in grandeur and refinement. This Olmec tradition put its mark on pottery figurines springing from the most ancient archaeological levels. At the base of that phantasmagoria of dazzling and ephemeral cultures, so characteristic of pre-Columbian America, there must have been, then, another, of which the typical traits persisted over a period of a thousand to fifteen hundred years and which, in the present state of our knowledge, would appear to have been the most perfect although originating from nothing. The problem of the source of the pre-Columbian civilisations thus takes on an unsuspected size.

On the ground of Maya archaeology, which had been supposed to be more solid, another surprise was in store for researchers. Up till now scientists were convinced that the pyramids serving as bases for the Maya temples were only mounds of earth and debris re clothed with an architectural adornment. But recent excavations at Palenque, in the State of Chiapas in southern Mexico, have revealed a zigzag staircase in the centre of the principal pyramid, proceeding from summit to base and leading to a subterranean room, the walls of which are covered with stucco. In the centre of this chamber there is a great carved slab of stone, representing a splendidly dressed personage seated on a throne. Because of the rainy season, which interrupted excavations, this stone cannot be taken out until the spring of 1953. What will be found in the coffer or coffin of stone which it appears to cover cannot be known at present. But it has already been ascertained that personages of high station had been sacrificed in front of the entrance to the chamber before it was walled up. Despite the latter fact, it was possible to send offerings or receive messages or inspiration through a sort of tube, or hollow serpent, penetrating the wall.

Is there something here to suggest, as it already has to some, the Egyptian pyramids and their secret funerary chambers? Yet the enormous divergence in dates and the fundamental differences in architectural principles which seem to have been applied in the two cases cannot be overlooked.

However this may be, a new chapter in American archaeology starts with the discovery at Palenque.

So far as South America is concerned, the discoveries briefly indicated above are commented on and discussed in several publications.⁴ The most important point is the discovery of agricultural civilisations without

⁴cf. W. C. Bennett, 'A Reappraisal of Peruvian Archaeology'. *American Antiquity*, XIII, 4, 2, 1948; cf. also W. C. Bennett and J. B. Bird, *Andean Culture and History*. New York, 1949.

pottery and without corn. Studies dealing with the most backward phases of Andean civilisations will receive a vigorous impetus from the publication of the first volume of P. Rivet's and G. de Créqui-Montfort's monumental work.⁵

Aided on one side by nuclear physics, anthropology turns on the other hand towards botany and, more particularly, genetics, to obtain results which it must attempt to put into agreement with the preceding theories. (Perhaps this task will prove not to be very difficult.) Recent articles⁶ bring extremely unsettling arguments in favour of the idea of a South Asian origin of the American forms of cotton and of all forms of corn.

Cultivated American cotton of twenty-six chromosomes would have originated from a grafting of cultivated Asiatic cotton of thirteen chromosomes and wild Peruvian cotton, likewise of thirteen chromosomes. Genetic considerations and the chronology given by the radio-carbon method suggest that the Asiatic species must have been introduced into South America even earlier than the first millennium. With regard to corn the situation is even stranger. There is no cultivated plant the American origin of which has been so freely admitted. Yet it seems impossible to discover its place of domestication or the wild species from which it might have been derived.

By another approach, linguistics and archæology suggest a belated introduction of corn in America. The most ancient specimens, very different in form from those of today, go back to about 2500 B.C., and in South America as well as in North America agricultural cultures without corn existed. The presence of primitive forms of corn in the mountainous valleys of South-eastern Asia, unknown in India and China until the re-introduction of American corn in the seventeenth century, could furnish a very seductive solution. Yet it must be admitted that any regular relations between Southern Asia and America at a date which could not be less than the third millenary B.C. raise problems which are nowhere near a solution.

On the other hand, geneticists seem to have solidly established that a goodly number of Hawaiian plants were imported from America at an early period. The reader will not fail to connect these speculations with the Kon-tiki expedition.⁷ Although Heyerdahl and his companions certainly

⁵Bibliographie des Langues Aymara et Kivcu, Vol. 1. Paris: Institut d'Ethnologie, 1951.

⁶cf. G. F. Carter, *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, VI, 2, 1950; C. R. Stoner and E. Anderson, *Annals of the Missouri Botanical Garden*, 39, 1949.

⁷T. Heyerdahl, *The American Indians in the Pacific*. Stockholm, 1950.

could not prove their hypothesis of the American origin of Polynesian civilisations, they at least demonstrated, through their prodigious voyage, how intermittent contacts between America and Oceania could have taken place.

To the discoveries of Ipiutak, on the edge of the Behring Straits, which their authors link to the Siberian civilisations of the first millennium B. C.⁸ should be added, from the other end of the continent, those of M. Reichlen in the north of Peru.⁹ The burial villages which Reichlen describes, cut into the flank of cliffs and garnished with houses and figurines, bring to mind similar usages among the natives of the Celebes. All these facts will undoubtedly contribute toward a reopening of the file, never properly classified, of prehistoric relationships between America and Asia.

Perhaps new discoveries in regard to the archaic civilisations of Asia and the Pacific will aid, in their turn, in filling the gap which still exists between the two worlds. Research in archæology, folk-lore, and ethnography has been resumed in Japan. As for China, we unfortunately know nothing about the work carried on under the new regime. But no one can forget the excitement which greeted the publication of von Koenigswald's discovery of the South Chinese 'giant' at the same time that South African excavations revealed, at levels apparently more ancient than anyone had presumed before, the existence of 'pygmies' who used fire and hunted in bands.

Definitive publication of these latter discoveries is imminent.¹⁰ As for the 'gigantropus', some doubts have more recently come up. Perhaps we are dealing here, after all, with an anthropoid rather than with a hominid.

The whole field of knowledge in human palæontology and prehistory of the Far East is the subject of a careful survey by H. L. Movius, Jr.¹¹ The essential problem is raised by the presence in the Lower Paleolithic, in two regions as widely separated from each other as Punjab and Java, of bifaced implements, in contrast to the chip industries found to predominate in all the rest of Asia. On the other hand it seems that the prehistoric period in Asia may be several hundreds of thousands of years later than that of Europe and Africa.

⁸cf. H. Larsen and F. Rainey, 'Ipiutak and the Arctic Whale Hunting Culture', *Anthrop. Papers of the American Museum of Natural History*, 42, 1948.

⁹*Journal of the Society of Americanists*, 39, 1950.

¹⁰cf. S. Zuckerman in *Nature*, Nos. 165 and 166, 1950.

¹¹'The Lower Paleolithic Cultures of Southern and Eastern Asia', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, 38, 4, 1949.

A new chapter of anthropology is about to open with the debut of an Oceanic archaeology. From research in the field, like that of Avias in New Caledonia¹² of Gifford at Fiji,¹³ and of others; from the vast compilation of Riesenfeld; and, finally, from the archaeological expeditions of the Chicago Museum of Natural History at Saipan and Tinian in Micronesia in 1949-50, a complex chronology is beginning to emerge, and one may hope for a progressive enlightenment in regard to the movement of populations, migrations, and revolutions which concurred with physiography to give these islands their out-of-the-ordinary character. Nothing extremely archaic appears elsewhere in this region of the world where, curiously enough, archaeology is called upon, side by side with mythology, legends, and genealogies conserved in the memory of the natives, to make its contribution to determining periods hardly older than three or four centuries.

In what concerns populations still alive, the greatest progress toward knowledge accomplished in the course of the last few years is undoubtedly marked by the publication of the *Handbook of South American Indians*.¹⁴ The sixth volume has just appeared, and only one more, the index, is yet to come. This vast compilation, directed by Professor J. Steward, may be debatable from the point of view of organisation. But it has the immense merit of presenting the work of a group of international scientists who have, nearly all, a direct knowledge of the American native. Even when they sum up ancient knowledge and works, their analyses are enlivened by direct ethnographical experience, and many new observations have found their place in this veritable summa, to which A. Métraux has made the principal contribution.

In South America the awakening of anthropological studies is being assisted by national projects. This movement is particularly marked in Brazil, where the *Revista do Museu Paulista*, directed by Professor J. Baldus, has been publishing for several years a rich collection of studies by a group of young scientists including E. Galvao, F. Fernandez, E. Schaden, D. Ribeiro, and others.

In Colombia, Reichel Dolmatoff has just published the second volume of a work about the Kogi Indians. He describes a society organised in

¹² *Journal de la Société des Océanistes*, vi, 1950.

¹³ *Archaeological Excavations in Fiji*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951.

¹⁴ Bureau of American Ethnology.

clans, with an extraordinarily rich metaphysico-religious system, wherein a good many of the traits which, no doubt, characterised the great Andean civilisations during the pre-Columbian epoch, can be seen alive today.

Thus, where writing is not available or legible, there are the customs which have survived to our day, and the oral traditions, to permit eventually the interpretation of that prodigious array of painted vases and carved monuments whose motifs, accessible in all the museums of the world, still await correct deciphering.

The famous motif of the man-eating jaguar, encountered from Peru to the Antilles, becomes quite clear, as demonstrated in Dolmatoff's commentary, in the context of Kogi concepts of death. The Kogi Indians have, as well, the custom of symbolising all names, sexes, ages, and social and religious status positions by means of the different varieties of pearls in the collars found in the ancient tombs which abound around their villages. They have, thus, elaborated a vast system endowed with the rules the materials of which are the archæological vestiges left by their distant ancestors.

The abundance of North American publications permits only the mention of a few titles. In the tradition of the school of Boas, Gladys Reichard, the last disciple of strict observance, distinguishes herself with her study, *Navajo Religion: A Study of Symbolism*.¹⁵ These two volumes constitute a unique attempt to establish for a native tribe a complete system of correlations among the pantheon, the myths, the rituals, the moral ideals, the classification of sensory perceptions, and art. Even though it could be objected that the author has not seen this task through, it cannot be denied that her work has meaning for the psychologist as well as the linguist, the historian of art as well as the historian of scientific thought.

A structural perspective is taken by Fred Eggan, a student of Radcliffe Brown, in his book *Social Organization of the Western Pueblos*.¹⁶ This work attempts to correlate the systems of kinship among the different Pueblo tribes as well as other aspects of their social organisation. *Mandan Social and Ceremonial Organization*, by A. W. Bowers¹⁷; *The Northern and Central Nootka Tribes*, by Ph. Drucker¹⁸; and *Los Otomies*, by P. C. Pizana¹⁹ show

¹⁵ 'Bollingen Series'. New York: Pantheon, 1950.

¹⁶ Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950.

¹⁷ Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950.

¹⁸ Bulletin 144, Bureau of American Ethnology, 1951.

¹⁹ Mexico City: Universidad Nacional, 1951.

what a wealth of original information can be gathered by a sane research method about populations which, through their long contact with the whites, have apparently undergone such far-reaching changes.

In the rest of the world new domains are being opened to anthropological research while others, which had been thought exhausted, have been reopened. For about five years the least aryanised populations of India have been the object of profound studies like those of Verrier Elwin,²⁰ of Christopher von Fürer Haimendorf,²¹ or the still unpublished researches of Louis Dumont. These studies suggest that the primitive races and cultures whose prototypes had been sought in the mongol populations of Assam and Burma²² actually extend much more to the west, as far as the central provinces.

These populations have odd institutions, like the bachelor houses or special asymmetrical forms of preferential marriage. The understanding of these institutions is probably indispensable to the reconstruction of the most archaic types of Indo-European culture.

The studies just mentioned constitute models of ethnographical investigation. It is thanks to them that the problem of the striking analogies between certain South-Asian items and their Scandinavian counterparts, a problem presented till now on a purely archæological ground, promises new developments on the sociological plane. As those ancient institutions seem to have extended toward the East into Japan and into Indonesia, an immense problem is raised, not only in historio-geographic terms, but in regard to structural typology. The inquiries on Indo-China by K. G. Izikowitz²³ and those by M. G. Condominas bring forth new facts on this part of the world.

On the Japanese side, we have drawn attention to the efforts of specialists like Takeda Hisayoshi, Yanagida Kunio, and Naoe Hiroji, to collect a unique folk-lore before it disappears completely. As far as Indonesia is concerned, one should single out the work of A. E. Jensen²⁴ which contains source material gathered before the war but utilised by the same

²⁰ *The Muria and Their Ghotul: Myths of Middle India*. Oxford University Press, 1947, 1949.

²¹ *The Raj Gonds of Adilabad*, Vol. I. London-New York: Macmillan, 1948.

²² cf. E. R. Leach, 'Jinghpaw Kinship Terminology', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 1950.

²³ *Lamet, Hill Peasants in French Indo-China*. Goteburg, 1951.

²⁴ *Die Drei Ströme. Züge aus dem geistigen und religiösen Leben der Wemale, einem Primitiv-Volk in den Molukken*. Frankfurt am Main, 1948.

author in a recent theoretical work.²⁵ We should draw attention, likewise, to the sociological studies of P. E. Josselin de Jong.²⁶

The Pacific islands have been the scene of important economic and social transformations. Striking information about this region comes from such authors as Ian Hogbin,²⁷ who describes what happened to the culture of a village in New Guinea—i.e., in one of the least-known and least-visited parts of the world up to 1939—after the successive Japanese and American occupations and the contact, which these implied, with the most perfected modern means of communication and of destruction. The picture is rather pitiful.

On the other hand, the American Navy, who took charge of the islands of Micronesia, must be credited with the most systematic investigation, on the largest scale, of customs, languages, and institutions that has ever been undertaken among a group of indigenous populations. These investigations were generously supported by the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Studies (which, incidentally, sponsored the Carbon 14 studies to which reference was made above).

Micronesia, nearly unknown up till recently from the ethnographic point of view, came into the limelight through a multitude of inquiries and through notes which the natives themselves learned to take.²⁸

In Australia, the rigour and penetration of A. P. Elkin's research and teaching and the quality of work published in the review *Oceania* over a period of twenty years by a group of investigators gathered round him have resulted in what might be considered a small ethnographic miracle, had not the ground been so carefully prepared over a long period of time. A young couple of researchers, Mr. and Mrs. Berndt, brought to light an entirely new aspect of those Australian societies which seemed to have lost all interest both on account of the exhausting zeal of previous investigators and the progress of civilisation. In a series of publications, whose prolificity does not detract in any way from the vigour and compactness of the content, this exceptionally endowed couple is in the process of

²⁵ *Mythos und Kult bei Naturvölkern*. Wiesbaden, 1951.

²⁶ *Minangkabau and Negri Sembilan Socio-political Structure in Indonesia*. Leyden, 1951.

²⁷ *Transformation Scene*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1951.

²⁸ cf. the writings of H. G. Barnett on Palau, published by the University of Oregon in 1949; of A. Spoehr on the Marshall and Gilbert Isles (Chicago Museum of Natural History, 1949), and of W. H. Goodenough on Truk (Yale University Publications in Anthropology, 46, 1951).

writing, all alone, a quite new chapter in the sociology of that part of the world.²⁹

The interest of their publications is as vast as the range of their observations, extending from the complete ritual texts, which they were the first to gather, transcribe, and endow with a critical apparatus, to the primitive paintings they have published. The latter are astonishing compositions representing sexual acts in which human beings appear to be insects; semi-symbolic and semi-realistic illustrations of myths in which every detail, every colour, has a significance.

We are too uninformed about Soviet research to give a detailed analysis of anthropological progress in Siberia and elsewhere. Certain works analyse the impact of the collectivisation of farm lands on the traditional social structure of Central Asian populations. Some curious functional transitions appear between the exogamic clans or sub-clans and the work brigades. A recent article by I. A. Lopatin³⁰ shows, in the same sense, how the poetic form of the *chastushka* maintains itself in the villages while expressing new preoccupations.

Up to last year the ethnographico-linguistic doctrines of Marr dominated the theoretical interpretations of Russian scientists. It is well known that the vigorous polemic among specialists, whose outcome was determined against Marrism by three ringing interviews of Stalin, has altogether modified this orientation. A summary of texts relative to this affair has been translated and published by Columbia University.³¹ According to the present official thesis, language does not stem either from the 'super-structures', as Marr would have it—with the consequence that each phase of linguistic development would be the instrument of the dominant class—nor from the 'substructures', but from a separate category, in which belongs also the technical apparatus of a society. 'For the technical apparatus, just like language, is to some extent indifferent to classes, and both can be put to work by different classes, whether old or new.' The obvious conclusion is that the evolution of both language and technique is governed by its own laws. 'Grammar', said Stalin, 'resembles geometry in that it founds its laws on concepts which are abstracted from the

²⁹ *Women's Changing Ceremonies in North Australia*. Paris: L'Home, 1950; *Kunapipi, A Study of an Australian Aboriginal Cult*. Melbourne: Cheshire, 1951; *Sexual Behaviour in Western Arnhem Land*. New York, 1951. To these must be added numerous articles and other works actually in the press.

³⁰ *Journal of American Folklore*, No. 252, 1951.

³¹ *The Soviet Linguistic Controversy*. King's Crown Press, 1951.

experience of objects, and it considers objects as bodies without concrete character.' It is too soon to know what influence this doctrinal shift will have on Soviet anthropology.³²

African studies are now receiving the aid of governments and international institutions, which are awakening to the dangers implicit in the transformation, already violent in several regions, of the traditional structure of indigenous societies. As this structure rests essentially on family ties, the International Institute of African Studies, supported by UNESCO has considered it useful to follow up a previous volume on African political systems with an important work, *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*.³³ This collection of studies, by different authors, directed by Professors Radcliffe Brown and Daryll Forde and prefaced with a long essay by the former, covers the principal types of African societies. Its theoretical value is in no way inferior to its practical usefulness to the administrator and the missionary.

Two more publications, somewhat in the same direction should be noted: the first of three volumes announced by G. Wagner, *The Bantu of Northern Kavirondo*³⁴ and the second volume of Professor Fortes' work devoted to the Tallensi,³⁵ which undertakes an analysis of the tensions developing in a polygamous society.

Dr. Léon Pales takes a very different point of view, but one no less essential to the knowledge of those mechanisms which regulate the functioning of African societies. Under the auspices of the Institut Français d'Afrique Noir, he is preparing the publication of his monumental inquiry into native diets. In regard to a race of African origin transported to Antilles soil, we should mention the work of Alfred Métraux.³⁶ Other books are in preparation. Among these, the work of G. Balandier and P. Mercier, both associated with the Institut Français d'Afrique Noir (IFAN), and Mme Paulme's study on the Kissi are of particular interest.

³² Among recent contributions to anthropology from the Soviet Union, published there or elsewhere, we should like to mention the work of V. N. Tcheretsov, D. A. Olderogge, A. Kondaurav, F. D. Gourevich, all of which was published between 1946 and 1950 in specialised Soviet journals; mention should further be made of the important study of R. Jakobson, 'Slavic Mythology', in Funk and Wagnall's *Standard Dictionary of Folklore* (New York, 1950); the *Atlas to the Prehistory of the Slavs*, by K. Jazdzewski (2 volumes, *Acta Praehistorica*, I, Lodz, 1948-49); and, finally, the monograph of Th. Chodzilo, *Die Familie bei den Jakuten* ('Internationale Schriftenreihe für Soziale und Politische Wissenschaften', Freiburg, 1951).

³³ Oxford University Press, 1950.

³⁴ Oxford University Press, 1950.

³⁵ *The Web of Kinship Among the Tallensi*. Oxford University Press, 1950.

³⁶ *Making a Living in the Marbial Valley, Haiti*. Paris: UNESCO, 1951.

The more traditional forms of inquiry, too, are drawing their profit from this renewal of interest. Thanks to the work of J. P. Lebeuf, the ancient civilisation of the Sao is starting to emerge. Mr. Leakey is publishing his findings with regard to cultures even more archaic,³⁷ and Abbé Breuil has just reported from South Africa the uncovering of rock paintings representing personages of a Nilotic type reminding one, occasionally, of ancient Egypt. These discoveries, perhaps, may authorise the great prehistorian to insist on his theory regarding the advanced age of at least some of these paintings. The amazing English discoveries, finally, of bronzes and terracotta figures at Ifé are still fresh to our minds.

In a series of articles published two years ago in the *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* (1950-1) J. Greenberg has taken up the whole problem of African language classifications and arrived at such revolutionary conclusions as the affirmation that there is a relationship between the Sudan and the Bantu tongues.

Swedish methods of distribution on maps are illustrated in H. Tegnæus's *Le Héros Civilisateur*.³⁸

Assisted by a group of researchers of the first rank, including Mmes Dieterlen³⁹ and de Ganay, M. Griaule has begun to unravel the skein of mythological, philosophical, and symbolic systems of the Sudanese. These discoveries, complemented by the work of M. Leiris,⁴⁰ have made a great deal of ink flow. It has been said even that the Dogons and the Bambara play a role today in French philosophical thought analogous, though inverse, to that which the Arunta played forty years ago, when the research works of Durkheim and Lévy-Bruhl were first published. It was at that time a matter of proving, on the basis of an indigenous example, that primitive thought proceeds in categories which cannot be reduced to those of civilised thought. On the contrary, however, Griaule and Dieterlen are pleased to recognise in the cosmological theories of the Sudanese forms of thought very close to those of the ancient Greeks or Egyptians. The relationship is beyond doubt. It awaits, however, an adequate interpretation. Are we faced here with an original development, on the local level, of Mediterranean themes subject since ancient times to innumerable variations, including those brought by Islam? Or should the Sudan be considered, as certain philosophers feel inclined, rather imprudently, to consider it, as the conservatory of the most authentically archaic

³⁷ *Excavations at the Njoro River*. Oxford University Press, 1950.

³⁸ Upsala, 1950.

³⁹ *Essay on the Bambara Religion*. Paris, 1951.

⁴⁰ *La Langue secrète des Dogons*. Paris: Institut d'Ethnologie, 1948.

forms of thought in the western world? Only the publication of the texts and their philological and anthropological analysis will allow a decision in favour of one or the other interpretation.

The appearance of an imposing series of anthropological treatises within the space of two or three years is the surest indication of the increasing prominence of theoretical preoccupations in this field.⁴¹ However different in their methods, all these works arrive at the common conclusion, first proposed by Marcel Mauss,⁴² viz., that any social system forms a whole and that it is impossible to understand any one aspect (economic life, religion, social institutions, art, etc.) without considering it in function of the whole. At the source of this veritable *credo* of contemporary ethnology—put within reach of the cultivated public by Clyde Kluckhohn's prize-winning book, *Mirror for Man*, New York, 1949—there are various influences. Each of them is responsible for a particular trait of the hypothesis: Marx, Boas, Freud, Malinowski, Radcliffe Brown, and the phonological school of Prague. This new approach has been adopted by the sixth and last edition of the most celebrated manual of research, *Notes and Queries on Anthropology*.⁴³

The concept of structure provides a common denominator for ideas which are often divergent. It is significant that the term 'structure' appears with growing frequency in the titles of general works.⁴⁴ True enough, the analogy stops there. While the functionalism of Radcliffe Brown remains close to organic considerations and takes its models from psychology and biology, Murdock uses a statistical method to establish correlations between isolated traits and reconstructs his ensembles empirically. On his part, Lévi-Strauss seeks to define 'structure' with the aid of 'constants' which should be extracted from an intensive analysis of total cultures and from certain forms of modern mathematical thought.⁴⁵

⁴¹The principal ones are: A. L. Kroeber, *Anthropology*, 2nd ed., 1948; M. L. Herskovits, *Man and His Works*, New York, 1948; R. H. Lowie, *Social Organization*, New York, 1948; S. F. Nadel, *The Foundations of Social Anthropology*, London, 1951; R. Firth, *Elements of Social Organization*, London, 1951; and K. Birket-Smith, *Geschichte der Kultur*, Zürich, 1948.

⁴²*Sociology and Anthropology*. Paris, 1950.

⁴³Published by the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1951.

⁴⁴*Social Structure*, a Collection of Essays Compiled by M. Fortes in Honour of A. R. Radcliffe Brown. Oxford University Press, 1949; cf. also two other works, appearing the same year, both aiming at the formation of a general theory of kinship: *Social Structure*, by G. P. Murdock, New York, 1949; and *Les Structures élémentaires de la parenté*, by the present writer, Paris, 1949.

⁴⁵cf. 'Language and the Analysis of Social Laws', *American Anthropologist*, 53, 2, 1951.

The phenomena of 'structure' are examined in other than static aspects. Numerous authors, principally American, devote themselves to the study of structure in the sense of 'pattern', or, in other words, as system of relationship offering specific combinations for each particular culture and providing for each individual the model to which he must assimilate in order to function as a member of his group.

Here we are at the border line between anthropology and psychology and even of psychoanalysis, since the process of assimilation is largely unconscious and connected with experiences some of which, at least, have an infantile character.

This proximity is attested by the recent work of Roheim and Devereux.⁴⁶ The latter describes, and comments on, the psychotherapeutic treatment of a Plains Indian and presents some theoretical views of great ingenuity. Above all he stresses the fact that any psychological analysis of a subject must be conducted within a frame of reference, which is given by his particular culture: An Indian might seem to be neurotic by the standards of white society. Yet he might be perfectly normal or, on the other hand, psychopathic, if his complaints are placed in the context of his own tradition. On the other hand, Devereux criticises the thesis by which the cultural 'pattern' would be integrally transmitted to the individual during his earliest childhood.

This problem of the connexion between infancy and society is the theme of a recent presentation by E. H. Erikson.⁴⁷ The author illustrates his thesis with comparative examples taken from two indigenous tribes, the Sioux and the Hurons, and from three modern societies, American, German, and Russian. Devereux and Erikson are both anthropologists and psychoanalysts. Another important contribution to the same subject is afforded by the work of H. Grandquist.⁴⁸

Investigators grouped round Dr. Margaret Mead are trying to transform the concept of 'cultural pattern' as it has been defined above, extending it to modern societies. In this new interpretation, 'cultural pattern' becomes 'national character'. After some still unpublished experiments with the foreign colonies in New York City, Mead and Gorer have

⁴⁶ *Psychoanalysis and Anthropology*, by G. Roheim. New York, 1950; *Psychoanalysis and Culture: Essays in Honor of Geza Roheim*. New York, 1951; *Reality and Dream*, by George Devereux. New York, 1951.

⁴⁷ *Childhood and Society*. New York, 1951.

⁴⁸ *Child Problems Among the Arabs: Studies in a Muhammedan Village in Palestine*. Helsingfors-Copenhagen, 1950. Two volumes were published previously.

taken up the problem of the American character and, more recently, of the Russian character.⁴⁰

In an article appearing in the journal *Natural History* ('What Makes the Soviet Character') the author outlines her method. To begin with, a model of the pre-Revolutionary Russian national character was to be built by submitting *émigrés* to questionnaires and tests and by analysing written sources, 'seeking beyond these the human beings who produced them and who believed in them'. In the second stage, a model of the bolshevist intelligentsia was to be constructed. Finally, an analysis of official declarations was attempted, covering also the literature, films, etc., of the Russia of today. On this basis various problems were posed: what will be the evolution of children, reared in accord with the old system, when they are exposed to conditions implicit in the new, etc.? The conclusion appears to be that methods of swaddling and their evolution play a considerable role in the formation of the national character.

By a curious paradox, ethnography, which originally depended on documentation by observers on the spot and did not hesitate to traverse half the world in order to become an eye-witness, has experienced a transformation under the hands of Dr. Mead. It has become a kind of technique, operating long-distance and to the exclusion of any direct observation, to determine the most intimate driving forces of a civilisation.

It is not necessary to follow Mead in these adventurous enterprises to discover that anthropology is now sufficiently mature to approach the study of societies more complex than those to which it had been previously limited. The real question is to find out to what degree of complexity the anthropologist can progress with impunity.

An as yet unpublished inquiry, conducted in 1950 by Messrs. Bernot and Blancard in a French village called for the occasion 'Nouvelle', and employing methods of observation of a truly ethnographic and psychological character, has yielded very convincing results. But 'Nouvelle' had only five hundred inhabitants. It is by no means certain that the same methods could be applied in communities more populous, where direct observation might have to be replaced or supplemented by other methods such as statistics, questionnaires, and the study of samples.

However this may be, the modes of anthropological orientation differ widely according to whether we are dealing with relatively simple societies which are considerably different from the society of the observer

⁴⁰ *Soviet Attitudes toward Authority*, by M. Mead. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1951.

and, for this reason, may appear to him as static, or with societies of a type more closely related to that of the observer, whose dynamic aspect therefore is more easily perceptible to him. In this respect it is striking to note that attempts to introduce dynamic perspectives in studies of the first type have hardly yielded more than the formulation of the negative concept of acculturation. On the other hand, studies of the second type have contributed toward placing the accent on the relationship between the individual and the group.

The most commendable collective effort on this problem, guided jointly by an anthropologist and a psychologist, is embodied in *Personality in Nature, Society, and Culture*.⁵⁰

These differences in orientation are reflected also in national points of view. Thus Americans willingly consider themselves 'dynamists' in contrast to the 'static' attitude of their foreign colleagues. In the *American Anthropologist* for October-December 1951, G. P. Murdock states the case against the present tendencies of British anthropology. With regard to the African systems to which we have referred above, Murdock reproaches English anthropology with excessive formalism, disdain of history, and lack of interest in those aspects of social life which are not strictly institutional. To sum it all up in terms that are not indeed in the text of the article, the British school would seem to sin through static spirit, dogmatism, and scholastic methods. Its present orientation would approximate it closer to sociology than to ethnology in the true sense of the word.

In the same issue of the *American Anthropologist* a respected representative of the incriminated school, Raymond Firth, takes the defence and offers a better-shaded picture of the activity of his colleagues. But while he clarifies, in a number of ingenious observations, the respective position of the two masters of British anthropological thought, Malinowski and Radcliffe Brown—the former a romantic, the latter a classicist; the former mindful, in the first place, of the originality and diversity of each individual experience in the frame of the social group, the other anxious, above all, to define equilibriums and proportions—Firth enlarges the scope of the debate. The crucial question, he says, is whether the out-moded conception of anthropology will prevail, which, in order to preserve at any cost the solidarity among the different aspects of culture, would insist on artificially lumping together disciplines which have no longer any connexion between them, such as social anthropology and physical

⁵⁰ Clyde Kluckhohn and H. A. Murray, editors. New York: Harvard University Press and A. A. Knopf, 1949.

anthropology, technology, archæology; or whether the Social Sciences will finally be recognised as a unity, at least potential, under whose auspices social anthropology (to use here the British terminology) will proceed hand in hand with sociology, social psychology, and economics.

A quite different approach thus brings us back to the problem of the proper *placing* of anthropology among the sciences. This problem has been tackled most strikingly by E. E. Evans Pritchard, Professor at Oxford University, first in a series of lectures for the British Broadcasting Corporation, then in an article in *Man*, and finally in a book.⁵¹ Is anthropology a science of Man or does it spring from the sciences of Nature? Is it a discipline connected with history and philology and differing from these traditional sciences only in the measure in which it occupies itself with civilisations greatly detached from our own?

If this view is correct, the relations between anthropology on the one hand and history and philology on the other would be similar to those established between the so-called 'classical' and 'non-classical' forms of these two latter disciplines.

Classical philology thus embraces Greek studies, Roman studies, and, more generally, anything touching on western civilisation. Anthropology would comprehend, together with the civilisations of indigenous America, Africa, Oceania, etc., a third group of civilisations still more remote. Apart from this division of labour, however, its preoccupations would remain the same as those of the other sciences of Man: to describe, to reconstruct, and to interpret the diverse forms of human experience in order to convey them in an intelligible form to those not having any share in them.

This way of looking at anthropological problems is exemplified, in its very name, by the School of Oriental and African Studies in London—a name which incorporates anthropological studies into the humanistic tradition.

Everybody today agrees more or less that physical anthropology and social anthropology are definitively setting out on separate roads. The former is undoubtedly destined to merge with genetics⁵² while the latter is on its way toward becoming an autonomous discipline.

But is it necessary to see in the latter a 'culturology' as Leslie A. White

⁵¹ *Social Anthropology*. London, 1951.

⁵² Cf., e.g., *Races, A Study of the Problems of Race Formation in Man*, by C. S. Coon, S. M. Garn, and J. B. Birdsell. Springfield: C. C. Thomas, 1950; *Genetics and the Races of Man*, by W. C. Boyd. Boston: Little Brown, 1950.

would have us⁵³; or is a further split likely to ensue (as Firth and Evans Pritchard seem to suggest) dividing the field between a *cultural anthropology*, dedicated 'to the study of the sum-total of accumulated resources, both non-material and material, which social experience permits us to utilise, to modify, and to transmit'; and a *social anthropology* which would stress, above all, the 'human component, the individuals, the relationships by which they are united'.⁵⁴ The real problem is whether this division, acceptable for reasons of a practical order, must, as Evans Pritchard proposes, draw social anthropology into the camp of the 'humanities'.

A broader discussion of this problem would lead us too far afield. The gist of all these debates is that anthropology is going through a crisis of conscience which, perhaps, is no more than a crisis of growth. Since the traditional social sciences (sociology, political science, law, and economics) seem incapable of dealing with anything but abstractions, anthropology feels increasingly aware of its traditional calling, which is to constitute a *study of man* in the true sense of the word.

Its mission, then, is, in the first place, to observe and to describe; secondly, to analyse and classify; finally, to isolate constants and formulate laws. This course, although traversed in a much more concentrated span of time, is no doubt parallel to that taken by the natural sciences. Yet anthropologists are aware of the fact that those constants cannot be found at the level of concrete observation and that the measurable aspects of social phenomena are as far removed from experience as, say, the data of geology and mineralogy are from the conclusions of nuclear physics.

Hence the discouragement, as manifested in certain efforts to limit a domain whose immensity affrights the researcher. His attitude might perhaps be different if he realised that anthropology, far from reducing itself to being just one of the social or human sciences beside many others, embodies the scientific aspect of *all* types of research concerning Man, while the other disciplines represent only the empirical aspect of this research.⁵⁵

The work of Dumézil, furthermore, shows that history, too, can be structuralist.⁵⁶ No attempt must be made, therefore, to restrict the field of anthropology. It should be divided, rather, among various specialists, just

⁵³ *The Science of Culture*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Co., 1949.

⁵⁴ Firth, loc. cit.

⁵⁵ cf. Daryll Forde, 'The Integration of Anthropological Studies', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, LXXIII, parts 1-2, 1948.

⁵⁶ *L'Héritage Indo-Européen à Rome*. Paris, 1949.

as the physics of the seventeenth century, for example, now finds itself divided up among a multitude of studies calling for experimenters and theoreticians, for tests in the field and work in the laboratory, for methods of observation and methods of analysis. In other terms, what is needed is not a reduction of anthropological ambitions. What is needed is a sound method of realising these ambitions. Such a method would certainly entail the breakdown of the traditional and self-contradictory distinction between the Sciences of Man and the Sciences of Nature; for all sciences rest on nature. The distinction is not founded on the true independence of the two domains, but merely on our own transitory incapacity to deal scientifically with the facts arising from the science of Man. If we finally succeed in treating them scientifically, they will no longer differ from the others.

Ethnology's contribution to progress in this direction is the discovery, to which anthropologists themselves are slow to awake, that it is the most concrete, the most qualitative, and the most limited observation which leads most rapidly, in the order of human facts, to the formation of general laws. To use an expression which, though coming from natural philosophy in particular, is valid for science as a whole, man is 'microscopic'.⁵⁷ The following example, which serves merely as an illustration, may bring us to the conclusion of these pages.

As human societies are founded upon communication, anthropology is coming to understand, step by step, that it must draw not only from the most advanced forms of linguistics such as phonology and structural linguistics⁵⁸ but also from research in physics and mathematics in so far as it has any bearing on the problem of communication.⁵⁹ From this angle, the *Preliminaries to Speech Analysis*,⁶⁰ recently published by the great linguist, Professor Roman Jakobson, co-founder, with Troubetzkoy, of the so-called School of Prague, is a work of decisive importance in that it proves that the linguist, and even the logician, of our day can apply to the

⁵⁷Pierre Auger, *L'Homme microscopique*. Paris, 1952.

⁵⁸cf. in this respect, N. S. Troubetzkoy, *Grundzüge der Phonologie*, published, in French translation, with some important additions by R. Jakobson, in 1949; E. Benveniste, *Noms d'agent et noms d'action en Indo-européen*, Paris, 1948; Zellig S. Harris, *Methods in Structural Linguistics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951.

⁵⁹cf. J. von Neumann and O. Morgenstern, *Theory of Games and Economic Behavior*, Princeton, 1944; N. Wiener, *Cybernetics*, Paris/New York, 1948; C. Shannon and W. Weaver, *The Mathematical Theory of Communication*. Urbana: The University of Illinois, 1949; *Colloque sur la Cybernétique*, edited by the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, under the chairmanship of Louis de Broglie. Paris, 1951.

⁶⁰'Technical Report' No. 13. Boston: Institute of Technology, 1952.

techniques of the engineer for a rigorous verification of his hypotheses.

At the very moment when attention was fixed on the great electronic calculating machines and their theoretical implications from the point of view of human communication, certain Africanists were formulating a theory of gong language, i.e., they discovered a form of communication among the native populations whereby these could transmit, on their wooden drums, the most complicated messages over often quite considerable distances. Specialists have not yet come to any generally accepted agreement as to the interpretation of these messages;⁶¹ but in certain instances, at least, there can be no doubt that the gong language is based on a system of code analogous to that used in the electronic calculating machines, viz., the reduction of a complex system of symbols to a system of base 2. So the most primitive forms of communication are linked to the most modern.

However unexpected it may have been, the short circuit between disciplines so apparently at opposite poles in scientific research as ethnography and mathematical physics forebodes great upheavals in the study of man. In this revolution anthropology is now sure of playing a major part.

⁶¹ cf., for example, A. Schaeffner, *Une société noire et ses instruments de musique*. Paris: L'Homme, 1951. His observations seem to contradict those of J. F. Carrington, as expounded in 'A Comparative Study of Some Central African Gong Languages', Institut Royal Colonial Belge, Sciences morales et politiques, Mem. xviii, 3, 1949.

ERRATA:

We wish to apologise for a number of errors in the text of R. D. Gillie's 'Discoveries and Disputations' (*Diogenes*, I, pp. 83-96), in particular we should like to draw the readers attention to the following:

Page 90, lines 6-7 should read: 'Iberian appears to be a preponderantly Hamitic language with Caucasian elements, while Basque appears to be a Caucasian language with some elements of Hamitic vocabulary'.

Page 95, line 9 should read: '... the axe of Kelermes was found in a barrow of the Kuban ...'

REVIEWS

JEAN PARIS ON KAREN HORNEY

D. VICTOROFF ON FRANCIS JEANSON

MOMOLINA MARCONI ON UBERTO PESTALOZZA

G. COEDÈS ON P. SCHWEISGUTH

By JEAN PARIS

New Ways in Psychoanalysis

By KAREN HORNEY

New York: W. W. Norton, 1939.

The Neurotic Personality of our Time

By KAREN HORNEY

New York: W. W. Norton, 1937.

If it is permissible to reduce Freudianism, without falsifying it, to its basic principles, everyone will agree that Freud understands psychological phenomena as being determined by unconscious motivations governed by the pleasure principle; also, that he considers disturbances in adult life to be a repetition of infantile experiences and that these are usually of a sexual kind. It is precisely with respect to these two points that Karen Horney departs from orthodox Freudian theory; in *New Ways in Psychoanalysis* she explains the reasons for and the extent of her break with it. 'My conviction is that psychoanalysis should outgrow the limitations set by its instinctivistic and genetic psychology.'¹ If that entails the elimination of now out-dated theories,

it is by placing Freudianism in its own epoch that such elimination becomes possible. By adopting the method of historical criticism used by Spencer in his work on Shakespeare as well as by Fromm in his anthropological studies, Karen Horney denounces those elements of Freudian thought borrowed from the nineteenth century and she formulates four specific criticisms.

The first of these deals with Freud's biological orientation: for instance, his tendency to regard psychic manifestations as the result of chemico-physiological forces: or to consider individual experiences as the result of constitutional or hereditary factors, or finally, to explain character differentiation between the two sexes by their anatomic differences.² Three errors have their

¹cf. *New Ways in Psychoanalysis* Chapt. I and II.

²Id. Chapt. I, II.

origin in these three postulates: the theory of the libido, the belief in the universality of complexes, and the interpretation of the feminine character on the basis of masochism and penis-envy. Point by point, Karen Horney contrasts modern scientific viewpoints with these concepts inspired by an earlier epoch. And since it is in these basic ideas that the difference between her theory and Freud's is most marked, her doctrine can best be evaluated by a discussion of her criticism of the Oedipus complex.

According to Freud and the majority of analysts, this complex consists of 'sexual attraction to one parent with an accompanying jealousy toward the other'.² In human development, this complex represents an inevitable stage which must either be overcome or the patient must suffer the neurotic consequences. As for its manifestations, it depends on individual circumstances whether this attachment to the parent is a conscious one, whether it is heterosexual or homosexual. For example, the wish of a boy to identify with his father may appear (depending on the case) as an incestuous wish directed towards the mother or as an indication of latent homosexuality. Nevertheless its goal remains purely hedonistic in both instances, and its origin is purely physiological. It may readily be seen on what prejudices a doctrine as deterministic as this must be founded: this is but a short step from assuming that all human relations are preceded by instinctual compulsions.

All this however is changed as soon as one gives up the supposition that these relations have a sexual basis. If the fixation on the parents no longer has pleasure for its goal it becomes necessary to find another function for it. At this point cultural considerations find their place. According to Karen Horney, in our time the circumstances surrounding the growing child are such as to engender in him considerable anxiety and hostility. Isolated and intimidated as he is, there exists in him, together with an abnormal demand for affection, a protest against his dependence. The means whereby he may end this conflict and put a stop to his anxiety is to attach himself to the more powerful of the two parents, the one best fitted to provide relief for him. 'The resulting picture may look exactly like what Freud describes as the Oedipus Complex'⁴ with this difference, that the child aims much less at satisfaction than at security, and that this tendency, far from being an omnipresent biological one may be explained by the characteristics of our culture.⁵

Freud's mistake, according to Karen Horney, was to attribute to physiological factors that which should have been laid at the door of the social structure, and this is the second influence which weakens his hypothesis. 'In the nineteenth century there was little knowledge regarding cultural differences and the prevailing trend was to ascribe peculiarities of one's own culture to human nature in general.'⁶

²Id. Chapt. IV.

⁵Id. Chapt. IV.

⁶Id. Chapt. II.

³Id. Chapt. IV.

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In other words, his exaggerated emphasis on the physical, instinctual, and sexual aspects of the neuroses arises from his inability to uncover their collective origins. For the same reason he is in error when he likens the beliefs and habits of 'primitive peoples' to the infantile and neurotic traits in our own day. From the same root stems the inadequacy of his therapeutic technique which, by teaching the patient merely the mastery of his difficulties, is without avail for comprehending the situation in all its complexity and correcting effectively what may be wrong in it.

The third error which Freud inherited is 'his tendency to view psychic factors as pairs of opposites', a tendency deeply rooted in the philosophic methodology of his time. Accordingly, every theory of the instincts is made up of opposing functions: libidinous compulsions face non-libidinous ones, narcissistic libido is contrasted with object-libido, self-preservation confronts self-destruction. And furthermore, Freud conceives such duality as the very framework of personality: the struggle of the 'id' and of the 'super-ego' against the 'ego'. Taking the 'id' to signify the totality of instinctual compulsions and the 'super-ego' as the agent of the prohibitions of morality, he interprets anxiety as the fear of being punished by the latter or being overwhelmed by the former. For this schematic concept Karen Horney substitutes her theory of 'basic anxiety'. Because of his deep-seated insecurity,

the neurotic is forced to have recourse to a strategy which will bring him some relief. If, for example, he seeks such relief in infallibility, he will develop 'perfectionist' tendencies which will find their expression in austerity or an exaggerated pride, in threatening attitudes or in self-accusations, and so forth. Outwardly the result differs little from that which Freud calls the 'punitive function of the super-ego', and which he views as an expression of self-hatred. In reality this is but a simple façade erected under the pressure of circumstances, because of the need to appear perfect and to hide whatever may contradict such pseudo-perfection.

The same detailed criticisms of narcissism, of penis-envy, of the instinct of destruction, of the concept of transference, of guilt feelings, and of masochistic phenomena underline the fundamental error of the Freudian system: the mechanistic-evolutionistic postulate according to which 'present manifestations not only are conditioned by the past, but contain nothing except the past'.⁸ Thus, if nothing new is created during the process of growth, it is evident that within the child there are potentially all the qualities of the adult. That is why the majority of psychoanalysts direct their attention to the infantile factors in the neurosis. According to them, the experiences, the fears, the repressed wishes of childhood are no longer a part of psychic continuity, and the unconscious thus acquires the quality of timelessness. Born of these primitive 'fixations',

⁷Id. Chapt. II.

⁸Id. Chapt. II.

troubles of later days are so many repetitions of earlier ones. In short the psychic life seems 'regulated not only by the pleasure principle but by a more elemental principle: the tendency of the instincts to repeat experiences or reactions already established'.⁹ As far as therapy is concerned, such a concept contains a dangerous illusion: that all the ills of the patient will vanish as soon as he becomes aware of their genesis. Consequently, if one admits with Karen Horney that the neurotic tendencies are in no way representative of original causes but are defence-mechanisms against anxiety, it follows that their compulsive repetition is not sufficient to explain them. It would be better, on the contrary, to look for the reasons why they persist by examining the function which they fulfil for the individual 'at the present time'. That is why the analyst should concern himself far less with uncovering memories of childhood than with clearing up the present role of these neurotic tendencies. Instead of clinging to the role of the past in the life of the patient, he will attack, above all, the concrete situation in which the patient lives, beginning with his environment.

These changes in theory and practice had as their result a social classification of the neuroses. Karen Horney gives this in one of her first books, *The Neurotic Personality of Our Time*. Though her system appears in *New Ways* only in the form of a criticism of the Freudian system, in this book we have a constructive exposition of

the ideas of the creator of 'social analysis'. She shows us initially that the classifications 'normal' and 'neurotic' can be conceived of only as functioning within a given culture, then goes on to look for the factors which, in our civilisation, are of a kind to influence personal relationships. In the course of this examination she discloses that the ills from which neurotics suffer are the same as those which, in less degree, plague normal persons, that is to say, insecurity, emotional isolation, hostility, the need for protection, feelings of inferiority, fear of blame and of failure, and so forth.

Already in *New Ways* Karen Horney invited sociologists and anthropologists to explain the social contradictions at the root of these difficulties. For, as she reminds us, 'There are certain typical difficulties inherent in our culture which mirror themselves in every individual's life and which, accumulated, may lead to the formation of neuroses.'¹⁰ Among these, there is, first of all, the fact that modern society is based on rivalry between individuals, so that the victory of one man implies the defeat of the other. Based on economic factors, this competition soon spreads to all other phases of life—the family, the school, the professions, politics—and everywhere causes fear and aggression. In these circumstances it is inevitable that man should feel isolated, frustrated, threatened, jealous and esteem himself and others only as measured by success. In order to palliate his fears, his jealousy, his hatred, he will arrive at an over-valuation of love, or,

⁹Id. Chapt. VIII.

¹⁰*The Neurotic Personality of Our Time*, Chapt. XV.

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in different conditions, seek feverishly for 'power and glory'; here is where the neurosis begins.

This situation is complicated by another anomaly: the disparity between the real foundations of our civilisation and its ideology. On the one hand, everything impels us to assert ourselves by getting rid of, by destroying others; on the other hand, moral and religious sanctions demand disinterestedness and respect for our fellow-men. This conflict, well suited to cause mistrust and guilt, is equalled only by the disparity between our theories of freedom and our real freedom. Actually for the great majority of men security, free will, culture, growth and development are but empty words. The result is that the individual staggers under the weight of great uncertainty; he sees himself imprisoned between the knowledge of his own value and complete powerlessness—incompatible circumstances resembling those for which the neurotic tries to find a solution: aggression and submission, love and resentment, excessive ambition and fear of the outcome of action, search for and fear of both success and failure.

These and other conditions arouse in man anxiety which is often unbearable and force him, if he is to recover a semblance of reassurance, to certain acts which Karen Horney divides into five groups. These are: the neurotic quest for affection, the over-estimation of self or the minimising of self, the desire for power, prestige and wealth, the retreat into suffering and self-accusations. These tendencies, con-

sidered by Freud to be ultimate motivations, now appear as reactions rather than impulses. They represent so many 'façades', as it were, safety measures freeing the neurotic from arriving at an understanding of his situation and permitting him, in an illusory way, to protect himself. Illusory—for such a protection, besides diminishing and defeating his vitality, his spontaneity, and his aptitudes, causes serious inhibitions and constantly threatens compulsions in other directions. Accordingly, his nature is essentially contradictory. The search for affection while going hand in hand with repression of hostility, is unable to rid itself of the anxiety to which everything contributes, and finds itself constantly in doubt, disappointed, put off, rejected. That is how those 'vicious circles' arise of which Karen Horney gives us numerous examples and which may well be considered as definitely showing the structure of present-day neuroses.

A doctrine so coherently presented leaves little room for criticism. Nevertheless it appears that by substituting her principle of security for Freud's pleasure principle, Karen Horney lays herself open to the same reproaches which she made to Freud. But perhaps, the secret error of *every* system is that, insofar as it is based and can be based on a single aspect of reality only, its deductions and conclusions are fated to remain partial, if not partisan. It should be judged only by its effects, with reference to its therapeutic methods. From this point of view though Karen Horney has perhaps opened new approaches for us, she

has surely left us with an ambiguity. Her analysis of anxiety and of the means whereby one can find protection against it are valuable, with these reservations: either this interpretation does not deal with the whole range of neurotic symptoms, more particularly sexual, aesthetic, political types of behaviour, or, on the other hand, it is increasingly difficult to disregard her indebtedness to the theories of Adler. No matter what Karen Horney may say, one need only compare her 'basic anxiety' with Adler's 'feeling of inferiority' or her idea of 'defence' with that of his 'compensation' to recognise that her views lose their originality.

And finally, it must be acknowledged that her study of social contradictions is as superficial as it is incomplete. Karen Horney does not claim to be a sociologist but her complaints against Western culture never go beyond the stage of being mere implications, they are never organised to

form a precise body of criticism. Sometimes she seems to believe that the discomfort of our times and the remedies applied are merely based on economic conditions, sometimes—and this perhaps unconsciously—she shows a certain nostalgia for religion. She is at times divided between admiration for Christianity and condemnation of its ethics, and temptation toward Buddhism with rejection of its negative attitude. In short, she has no positive remedy for any of the ills or vices for which she blames our society, and this lack by itself tends to put a damper on the optimism with which she expounds her theories. One should, however, not expect from the psychologist a solution of problems outside his special field. For that reason let us content ourselves with congratulating Karen Horney on having established between psychoanalysis and the social sciences—sociology, anthropology and economics—a contact as useful as it is fruitful.

By D. VICTOROFF

Signification Humaine Du Rire
(The Human Meaning of Laughter)

BY FRANCIS JEANSON

Paris: Edition du Seuil, 1950, 1 volume, pp. 213.

Francis Jeanson's study is all the more interesting because for the first time in the history of the theoretical definition of laughter we find ourselves in the presence of an attempt to explain laughter from the phenomenological viewpoint. Indeed, Mr. Jeanson tells us this in the very first pages of his book: 'Man exists only in so far as he turns towards a future which repeats and transforms the meaning of his past, and "this being from afar", as Heidegger calls him, understands himself only according to the goal which he has set for himself, or which he has permitted to be forced upon him' (p. 12). After this declaration of faith, it is not surprising that Mr. Jeanson—who, in spite of what he may say, is fully aware of

the classic theories on laughter—taxes the theorists with wanting to define laughter rather than to understand it. Such methods, he says, must invariably lead to an account of laughter based on the comic element, that is, to represent man as being conditioned by his environment, one factor only among so many other factors. Bergson's theory setting forth a definition of the comic in order to explain laughter is a case in point. Such a solution is illusory for it would imply losing sight of the basic freedom of the 'for himself' (*pour-soi*) and would present its laughter as depending on that 'in himself' (*en-soi*) which is the comic factor. Freud's theory finds more favour with the writer, for, although Freud is not aware of it, it

implies an endeavour to understand the nature of laughter. Notwithstanding, Mr. Jeanson reproaches psychoanalytic theory as a whole with justifying behaviour in 'bad faith', in as much as it establishes an explanation of human conduct based on that other 'in himself' (*en-soi*) which is the stored-up past of man in the guise of psychic complexes.

In short, to the various attempts made to explain laughter, the writer opposes an endeavour to understand laughter. It is man as a whole with his values and his attitude to the world that is shown up in laughter. We must take man as he is wholly and we must look for the human meaning of laughter. In every phase of our laughter we express our concept of life: that is why—contrary to the beliefs of the classical theorists—laughter cannot be explained by the comic element but, as an expression of ourselves, lends either this or that meaning to the comic. Hence, there is a basic ambiguity in laughter, as in all other forms of human conduct. 'Freedom can . . . manifest itself in a negative attitude of refusal to laugh, as well as in the resigned acceptance of some impulse coming from the outside; yet it shows itself as well in a positive way by the act of laughter itself' (p. 16).

By a succession of penetrating phenomenological analyses, Mr. Jeanson shows that laughter in its most general form 'is an implied reproach against man's own cowardice in not assuming the actual role of subject' (p. 19). From that point of view, laughter as pure expression of feeling tries to give the laughing individual the illusion of an

easy and comforting existing of an 'in himself' (*en-soi*); while, on the other hand, laughter which wants to recoup its losses on the level of reflexion tries to give the laughing individual the impression, no less illusory (though reassuring) that he exists as pure mind. The role of psychology in all this is, according to Mr. Jeanson, precisely this: to give man 'the means of apprehending the situation in which he finds himself, of making it truly his, and holding himself responsible for the meaning with which it is endowed by him' (p. 17). His book closes with a chapter on 'Laughter and Liberty', in which, in contradistinction to the two aspects of laughter which we have sketched and which are only the snares and entanglements confronting human liberty—Mr. Jeanson discusses laughter which is to be a gesture of liberation—that is to say, laughter full of awareness of our responsibility as beings who give to the world its significance.

Such a short analysis can surely not give an account, except in mere outline, of Mr. Jeanson's book, abounding as it is in interesting observations of all kinds. Let us say, however, that the distinction between the definition and the understanding of laughter, as the author views them, seems to us somewhat too rigorous and only applies to a number of extreme cases. For, as M. Lagache has well shown in his work,¹ in psychology all definition worthy of that name carries with it understanding, and conversely, it is doubtful whether there can be true understanding without definition.

¹ *L'unité de la psychologie*, Paris: P. U. F., 1949.

By MOMOLINA MARCONI

Religione Mediterranea

By UBERTO PESTALOZZA

Milano: Bocca, 1951, pp. 470.

It does not occur often, as far as I know, that a pupil is asked to review the work of his master. In just such a position *Diogenes* has put me by asking me to write on Uberto Pestalozza's *Religione Mediterranea*, the publication of which I supervised together with Mr. Untersteiner. However, since liberty of judgment is the law of the school from which I come, I did not hesitate to accept the invitation. Before going ahead, I should like, rather, to advise the reader of my personal responsibility for any typographical error that might have slipped into the book, while pointing out the asset to this edition of the sixty pages of double-column analytical index, a precious instrument of reference and methodical work.

The volume opens with two unpublished studies, 'Isis and the Pomegranate' and 'The Singular Sovereignty of Nut'. In 'Ardvi Sura Anahita' the author brings to light the pre-Aryan-European traits of the greatest goddess in the Iranian religion. The feminine members of the Greek pantheon are scrutinised in the light of Mediterranean mythology. 'The Silver-footed Thetis', 'Boopis Potnia Heres'; or specific images of divinity are examined: 'The Minoic Potnia, The Bull, and the Double-edged Axe', 'The Potnia in an Archaic Pithos'; or particular forms of sacred actions: 'Vegetables, Fruits, and Pastry in the Eleusinian Mysteries', 'The Athenian Thargelia', 'Youthful Priests and Priestesses in the Cult of

Athene and Artemis'; and, in the case of some Latin divinities, the myth—'*Mater Larum* and *Acca Larentia*'—or the ritual—*Juno Caprotino*, *Veneralia*—is clarified.

These are the most significant among his minor contributions to the field of Mediterranean studies. The inclusion of researches into Christian and Manichean subjects would have detracted from the organic character of the collection, which now gives a synthetic, practically complete view of the religion of the Mediterranean civilisation, and owing to this quality the book may well be of use to anyone who wishes to regroup the material in the form of a manual. It is the fruit of a long scientific life, consumed by the torment of research and the travail of recording it; but Pestalozza is always guided by that stern philological discipline which provides a solid base for research (and a guaranty for even the boldest hypotheses). It is this discipline that the young, or even those who are young no longer, try to shake off today; for haste bids them rush to a conclusion even if the word be left half-uttered, the critical examination unfinished. Philology is much indebted to Pestalozza for having clarified certain texts, till now obscure. His philological discipline was sharpened, if possible, by a growing inner demand for clarity, which cut his research down to the essential: the reader is referred to the '*Thargelia*', written in 1931-2, which, with all the intricacy of that ritual, remains a first-rate piece of research; and then, right afterwards, to '*Vegetables, Fruits, and Pastry in the Eleusinian Mysteries*', written in 1949: on the

whole, the same treatment; but twenty years later the touch is far more youthful. It is this youthful maturity which led Pestalozza to attempt a co-ordination of the various currents of research and thought (ethnological and linguistic, folk-lore and paleontological) and above all, to an awareness of the religious problem which is at the base of every expression of myth and cult. That is why myth and cult are equilibrated in his conception, while elsewhere research has been intent, till yesterday, on investigating the ritual and, nowadays, on reaching the core of religious meaning through myth alone. But if it is true that certain rituals can subsist without further experience of the divine to animate and justify them; and if it is true that often such experiences of the divine did not have an immediate echo in ritual, it is equally true that these cases are the exception and not the rule. Pestalozza has shown time and again quite clearly that myth and ritual form an indissoluble bond without which religion does not exist (cf. pp. 5 *et seq.*, 156 *et seq.*, 297 *et seq.*, 348 *et seq.*, and 369 *et seq.*). Leaving aside Brahmanism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism, which speak for themselves in this respect, the documentation of Malinowski, of Frobenius, or of Howitt on the ritual dances, the seasonal sacrifices, and the initiation rites in the Pacific area, in Africa as well as in Australia, prove that cult is a re-creation of oneself to God, because it is a re-creation of God: a re-creation, that is to say, of His gesture, His word, His story; which amounts to saying, His myth. All this lives in the rite, and the rite in it.

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The eternal femininity of the divine, a concept, inherited by the Aryan-Europeans from the Mediterranean peoples, which they both clearly accepted and dramatically contrasted, constitutes the dominant motif of these studies. The goddess, who providentially is mother, prostitute, and virgin, appears as the protagonist, together with her divine son and father, in a divine world whose stage-setting is the earth. The earth, still covered with woodland patches (whence the sacredness of the double-edged axe, pp. 181 *et seq.*; of the lions, pp. 57, 69, 141, 199, 215; of the bears, pp. 128, 236 *et seq.*; of the mountains, pp. 69, 87, 96); but by and large already tried by the plough (pp. 191 *et seq.*); enclosed between uncertain confines of sea and sky.

The sea—onetime kingdom of Thetis, who was not born a Nereide but was first a young mare and a centaur (p. 93); only, I remain sceptical with respect to that parade of roots, drawn into the picture to prove the origin of the

Centaurs from Asia Minor (which surely can be proven in other ways).

The sky—whence Nut lately rose, freeing herself from the arms of Seb.—And in Egypt 'the sky was considered feminine' (p. 71).

It was owing to her chthonian character as well as to her overbearing femininity that the great goddess Isis became 'She of the Pomegranate', a name pregnant with mystical significance, as is the name of her who offers enigmatically the fruit; in the same way, Heres becomes a 'boopis', as are also Io and Ishtar (p. 151). And human epiphany becomes not the last but the most significant of the goddess' manifestations (pp. 29 *et seq.*). Woman among women, she knows and guides and protects the travails of all women from the first revelations of puberty to the fulness of maternity. Then comes death, which, discounted in the agrarian experience by a periodical rebirth synchronized with a divine resurrection, gives to these Mediterranean peoples the longed-for peace of the Elysian fields (p. 15).

By G. COEDÈS

Etude sur la Littérature Siamoise
(Study of Siamese Literature)

By P. SCHWEISGUTH

Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1951, pp. 1-409, 1 carte.

'It was not our purpose', says the author in his introduction, 'to give the public a complete study of Siamese literature, but merely a bibliography of it with comments. If this work may, in later years, serve as a guide to others who wish to investigate the subject more thoroughly it will have attained the goal the author set himself in publishing it.'

In order to do justice to M. Schweisguth's book we should consider that it is the work of a pioneer in the field. The study of Siamese literature is an entirely new subject in Europe, and even in Siam it has, as far as I know, given rise to only one work of a general character, the anthology of Nay Tamra Na Muong Tai. It is somewhat

surprising that this work is nowhere mentioned in M. Schweisguth's book, for it is apparent that he drew some inspiration from it and in certain respects has often followed it closely.

What he modestly calls 'a bibliography with comments', is in fact a guide which permits the reader to find his way about in an unexplored field, in as much as it gives a carefully documented chronology, a judiciously classified enumeration of various categories, biographical notes taken from the best sources (notably from the meticulous introductions to the publications of classic works made under the direction of Prince Damrong), and a bibliography which, without being

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exhaustive, contains everything essential.¹

Siamese literature before the middle of the nineteenth century consisted exclusively in poetry. 'This is due', explains M. Schweisguth, 'just as in Sanscrit literature, to the intellectual temperament of the writers and to the utilitarian and didactic goals of Siamese literature in its beginnings. These works were generally written to be recited either on the stage or in religious ceremonies, and the verse form gave both the writers and the declaimers the opportunity to express themselves with all the solemnity desired: verse alone made it possible to remember texts whose content was sometimes sacred. It is also necessary to concede to the Siamese a natural taste for poetry, even among the least cultivated of the common people' (p. 12).

This poetry was in its origins a poetry of the court and has so remained until our day. Unfortunately nothing is left of the ancient popular poetry. Most of the kings, poets themselves, had at their courts poets who were in their employ, actually officials who collaborated in the literary productions of the ruler. It was an aristocratic literature, caring little whether it penetrated to the mass of the people, at that time for the better part illiterate. It was a literature of scholars; not only, as M. Schweisguth says, did the writers have to be highly educated in order to write

but the readers and the hearers had to be themselves equally well educated to understand; the texts are full of foreign words the meaning of which in Siamese is not always clear. It was a literature often anonymous or at least by writers whose biographies were empty of details and whose dates were uncertain and variable. It was a literature without great originality, for the poets, with rare exceptions, took their inspiration from the Sanscrit epics which they had come to know through the Khmers, and still more frequently from the literature on the Lives of Buddha, more particularly from the apocryphal Fifty Lives.

The quality of this poetry, meant to be chanted, is above all formal and consists in large measure in its form, in the harmony of the sounds of the language used², in the musical quality of its intonations, in the rhythm and the rhymes, or the assonances of its prosody. The richness of form makes up for the poverty of thought, and poetic emotion is aroused by the skilfulness and perfection of expression rather than by the depth of the sentiment.

All the qualities of Siamese literature are brought to light more or less clearly in M. Schweisguth's book. In his introductory chapter devoted to general information on the people of Thailand, their history, their government, the characteristics of their language and their literature, he formulates certain well-expressed opinions on these

¹This bibliography has one serious defect: it does not give the dates of publication of the works cited in the alphabetical list of authors at the end of the book. This at times makes cross references valueless.

²M. Schweisguth asserts (p. 16) that 'the Siamese language is not harmonious'. I do not share this opinion—for, without doubt, the Siamese is the most euphonic of all the Indo-chinese tongues, as well as the most agreeable language for singing.

traits. 'Even though Siamese literature is largely inspired by Sanscrit literature, it does, nevertheless, differ from this by special qualities endowing it with a character of its own. The Siamese have made the subjects and the personages dealt with more lifelike and natural: the most characteristic example of this is the book called *Ramakien* into which the Hindu epic *Ramayana* has been transformed. In their descriptions of nature, in the expression of the emotions, such as the sadness of leaving, regrets, frustrated love, the Siamese have in essentials remained themselves.' And a little further on, he says, 'There is little tragedy in the dramas, the finality of death is rare, most of the productions are childlike and have a moralising purpose. There are few scenes that shock, but, on the contrary, there is much gaiety and good humour, the descriptions are lively and picturesque. These qualities give this literature its special charm.'

After having explained (p. 14) that 'the authors gladly sacrifice content to form and care little whether or not they make use of this or that expression void of sense, provided it suits them euphonically'; and also that 'they often make obeisance to the rules of prosody, going so far as to substitute homophones with a different meaning for certain words where accentuation is to satisfy poetic laws', M. Schweisguth makes a very useful contribution to the understanding of Siamese poetry in an excellent chapter of his introduction where he deals with prosody. There he enumerates various facts of technique, heretofore inaccessible to the European

reader not familiar with the Siamese works on this subject.

In his 'bibliography with comments' of Siamese literature the author follows a chronological order. Beginning with the remains of the time of Sukhotai (thirteenth and fourteenth centuries), notably with the inscriptions and the Buddhistic cosmology of the Traiphum, which are the most ancient monuments of prose in Siam, he goes on to the first poetical writings, often hardly comprehensible, of the early period of D'Ayuta. Continuing, he traces the beginnings of the theatre in the sixteenth century, as well as those of the *Nirat*, or love-song, 'to give expression to the sorrow of a farewell, or a separation' dating from the seventeenth century. He attempts to give some reality to the persons of the poets who surrounded King P'hra Naray. Finally, he devotes three chapters to the eighteenth century, considered the Golden Age of Siamese literature.

The second half of the book deals with the much more familiar period, rich in writings of all kinds, from 1770 to our own days. This epoch has witnessed the birth of prose literature where we find examples of the work of the kings of the Bangkok dynasty and of several highly gifted writers, most of them, by the way, members of the royal family.

Following in his Siamese model, the anthology of Nay Amara, M. Schweisguth has also tried to give his book the character of an anthology and has given us many translations, choosing by preference the descriptions of landscapes and natural scenes.

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Unfortunately, as has been said before, the value of Siamese poetry lies in its form rather than its content. Even though the text may be fully understood, a task not always easy even for a Siamese if the poem is an ancient text, a translation of it, above all into a language as totally different from Siamese as French, is utterly incapable of giving even an approximate idea of the rhythm, of its musicality—in short of everything which makes for its charm and arouses the admiration of the Siamese. And since the thought content is generally meagre, where it is

not lacking entirely, and the simple emotions expressed, which arouse native sympathies, are hardly of a kind to touch the European reader, these translations have a general air of mediocrity and puerility which does not do justice to the originals fully entitled to be considered works of art of great merit and beauty. If M. Schweisguth wished by means of his various attempts at translation to set forth the artificiality of this poetry of scholars, lacking original ideas and the fire of inspiration, he has succeeded fully. But he might have reached this goal at less trouble to himself.

Notes on the Contributors

COLIN GRANT CLARK is Under-Secretary of State for Labour and Industry, Director of the Bureau of Industry, and Financial Adviser to the Treasurer in Queensland, Australia.

Born in 1905, he received his education at Winchester (Dragon School) and Oxford. He worked on the New Survey of London Life and Labour (1928-29), on the Social Survey of Merseyside (1929-30), and served on the Staff of the Economic Advisory Council, Cabinet Offices, in 1930-31. As a Lecturer and Visiting Lecturer Dr. Clark has been connected with the Universities of Cambridge, Melbourne, Sydney, and Western Australia.

His publications include *The National Income, 1924-31* (1932); *The Economic*

Position of Great Britain (in collaboration with A. C. Pigou) (1936); *National Income and Outlay* (1937); *The National Income of Australia* (in collaboration with J. G. Crawford) (1938); *Critique of Russian Statistics* (1939); and *The Conditions of Economic Progress* (1940) (revised edition, 1949).

LIONELLO VENTURI is Professor of the History of Modern Art at the University of Rome. Before the Fascist era, he taught at the University of Turin, whence he was dismissed owing to his refusal to take the Fascist oath. He spent many years as an exile in the United States.

Professor Venturi's works include: *Giorgione* (1913); *I Primitivi* (1926);

* Notes on the Contributors

Italian Paintings in America (1933); *Cézanne* (1936); *A History of Art Criticism* (1936); *The Archives of Impressionism* (1939); *Modern Painters* (1945); *Peinture contemporaine* (1948); and *Impressionists and Symbolists* (1950).

PIERRE DEFFONTAINES is Director of the Institut Français in Barcelona. He is the founder of the geographic institutes at the Universities of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Quebec, and the founder and Director of the *Revue de Géographie Humaine et d'Ethnologie*.

His major works include: *Les hommes et leurs travaux dans les pays de la Moyenne-Garonne* (Thesis) (1932); *L'Homme et la forêt en Slovaquie* (1932); *L'Homme et la forêt* (1934); *Géographie humaine du Brésil* (1939); and *Géographie des religions* (1940).

Professor Deffontaines is Director of the *Collection de la géographie humaine*, published by Gallimard, Paris.

HEINRICH VON FICHTEAU is Professor (*ausserordentlich*) of Medieval History at the University of Vienna.

He was born in 1912 and completed his studies, in history and history of art, in Vienna. Professor Fichtenau's major works include *Grundzüge der Geschichte des Mittelalters*, Vienna (1947) (2d ed., 1948); *Das karolingische Imperium. Soziale und geistige Problematik eines Grossreiches*, Zürich (1949); and *Urkundenbuch*

zur Geschichte der Babenberger in Österreich (in co-operation with O. Mitis and E. Zöllner), vol. I, Vienna (1950). The publication of vol. II is imminent.

LOUIS RENOU is Professor of Oriental Studies and a specialist in Vedic philosophy. Born in 1896, he has been Professor at the Faculté de Lettres of the University of Lyon in 1925-28; Professor at the École des Hautes Études, since 1929; Professor at the Faculté de Lettres at the Sorbonne, since 1937; and member of the Institut since 1946.

Professor Renou's publications include: *Valeur du parfait dans les hymnes védiques* (1925); *Grammaire sanskrite* (1930); *Bibliographie védique* (1931); *Étude de mythologie indo-iranienne* (1934); *Poésie religieuse de l'Inde* (1941); *Les Écoles védiques* (1947); *Sanskrit et Culture* (1950); and *Civilisation de l'Inde ancienne* (1950).

CLAUDE LEVI-STRAUSS is Professor at the École Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris. He formerly taught at the University of São Paulo and at the New School for Social Research in New York.

Professor Levi-Strauss has led several ethnological expeditions in Brazil; he has represented France as Cultural Adviser to the United States; and he is now Secretary General of the International Council of Social Sciences.

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